THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 72. PUBLICATION OFFICE, NO. 725 SANSOM ST. PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1893. FIVE CENTS A COPY. $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE No. 51

TOO LATE.

BY M. C. H.

The saddest words that the human heart
Can ever read from the book of fate
Are mine to-night, love, and we must part;
The dew to the flower comes all too late.

The dream that I've dream'd through two score years
Is gone, and my wild hope is over now;
The bridal veil may be wet with tears,
But it ne'er will rest on an aged brow.

Now go to the world; you can only know
In your silvery age that you're rich and great,
The hope that was yours, love, long ago,
Has perished now, for you came too late.

BENEATH A MASK

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," "DORA THORNE," "AT WAR WITH HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

"NO SUNSHINE," repeated the deep, melodious voice, whose music made Joan dumb. "You look indeed as if you had put every ray of sunlight out of your life." Then Despard came nearer.

"What have you been doing to yourself, Miss Maynard? You are—have you been ill?"

"You—you startled me," she told him meekly. She was deathly pale, but that was at sight of him; her cloak was long and black and unbecoming, making her look too slight and too tall; she had taken off her hat to relieve her head, and the lovely rich hair was blown about and disordered; her eyes seemed unnaturally large and too deeply shadowed, with an expression in their shadows and their depths the like of which Despard had never seen before. She looked up as she said "You startled me," and as the man, the keen, calm lawyer, met that glance of wondrous pathos and marvelous beauty, he forgot all the carefully prepared speech he had brought with him, and he spoke, as he most rarely did, on impulse.

"Why are you doing this? Do you want to kill yourself, and then me? How dare you write the insulting letter you did, and heap that abominable wealth upon me? Did you think—oh! Joan—did you ever think when you repulsed me so cruelly, that I cared for, that I even remembered your money? I made that will to ease your father's last moments, I was then ignorant of his identity, and I never dreamed whose name was to be coupled with yours. When I saw it, you recollect——"

"You forgave him," she said, low and tremulous, "I remember that."

"I had no power, no time, to destroy the iniquitous thing, you remember that. And then you—oh! Heavens, you showed your opinion of me plainly. You thought I had sold my pardon, and you heaped such insults upon me as even such a man as you believed me to be could not tamely have brooked."

"Insults?"

"Gross insults, what else? to pour your detestable wealth upon me—who want none of it, will have, touch, none of it. Listen, I have acted as your father's executor, and am winding up, and arranging his affairs to the best of my ability, but not one farthing of his will I ever finger or use. It will all remain intact or increasing, for you. You may as well know and face that fact at once."

"I will not have it; I will not have one farthing."

"You shall have it, every farthing."

"A dead man's will must have some power."

"A living man's will has more. I know by experience that entreaty avails nothing with you, I shall not have recourse to that. But you made a mistake in so precipitately taking the refusal into your own hands; what right had you to take for granted my willingness to marry you? I utterly refuse to fulfil such contract, thus half of the money is speedily disposed of; it returns to you—its rightful owner. You require it, I will not be cursed by it. I have sufficient for all my needs, and the salvation of my life has been work, imperative occupation. Wealth without exertion would mean for me ruin. You cannot work, a fragile butterfly like you; already the very thought of it has altered you past recognition; you must live in ease and luxury, your normal condition; buy a title with your wealth, and fulfil your destiny."

"Who is offering gratuitous insults now?" Joan broke in passionately.

"I apologise, I had no right to say so much."

"But you think of me as below contempt. I—I——" She staggered a little and clutched at the wall, for the cave was swimming round her.

"Are you ill—in pain?" the man asked, swiftly changing and advancing. But she waved him back, recovering herself.

"A little neuralgia, it is nothing. Where can Lady Lee be? Did you meet her?"

"I did; she directed me here and promised that we should not be interrupted. It is an odd place for an interview, but Lady Lee's idea was that you would never give me a satisfactory one in the house, you would escape to your own room or somewhere, 'ere matters could be finally settled—whereas here—neither you nor I quit this cave, Miss Maynard, until our affairs are settled."

The treachery of Julie was the last straw. Joan Maynard stood without support now, also without strength, facing an adversary who gave no quarter.

"You will not be troubled by me after to-day, I assure you of that, Miss Maynard. In all probability you and I see each other now, for the last time."

The comfort he intended such assurance to give, utterly failed to reach her, in fact his reassuring words but increased the intensity of the pain which was stabbing her heart through and through. There was not the faintest symptom of tenderness nor any trace of the love which was so surely dead in Despard's look or manner, naught but stern resentment and implacable resolution.

She had wished to destroy his affection, so she had told herself, and she had undoubtedly succeeded in eradicating it root and branch, but she could take no pleasure in her success while her heart was writhing and quivering in this awful agony.

"There," he continued in a deliberate, motionless manner, "bear with me now for a few questions more. I want to know what I had done to imbue you with the belief that I was a creature mean and despicable, in other words that I would accept such a legacy as you have tried to force upon me. Why did you allow that useless will to be made? And why, when I told you my history, poor dupe that I was, did you give me no hint that you knew it before far better than I did? I confess I am puzzled as to your motive for some of your actions."

"You wrong me—cruelly."

Brave Joan tried to speak coherently, but the pain at her heart surged into her head and dazed and bewildered her. She looked out at the tossing discolored sea, and the beating driving rain, and their unrest seemed to bewilder her more; she glanced up into her companion's face, and her very tongue seemed tied by those cold, pitiless eyes, those handsome stony features; in desperation she fixed her gaze on the ground and clasping and unclasping her hands, she stammered feebly—

"I—I never did know anything. My father told me nothing of the contents of his will. You made it, I filled in your name at his request, but he forbade me to read it, and I did not see—I was in such distress—I did not see my own name. I—I had no idea—I never dreamed—that I was so miserably involved."

"Miserably involved." He repeated her words without comment, but something in his tone made her blaze up.

"My name ought never to have entered that will. You put it there. How dared you write it? This most wretched complication has its origin with you, Mr. Despard."

"We waste time in these reprisals. I will only say that I was but a legal machine when I drew up that will according to instructions received, as I have drawn up hundreds of others. As a matter of form I asked your father if you were cognizant of and agreeable to his wishes, and he assured me that you were. Why you should expect me to interfere in your matrimonial arrangements further, I confess I am unable to conjecture, Miss Lucas."

His speech, his voice, his glance, were like so many lashes cutting her quivering heart each one.

"Oh," she uttered with a deep drawn breath and a face ghastly as death. "Let this weary matter rest. Tell me exactly why you came here to-day, and then—if you have any mercy in you—go!"

"I shall go directly you have acceded to my wishes—not before. I unconditionally refuse to marry you. You hear—you understand that?"

"I hear—I—understand—that." The bitterness of death was surely passed now.

"By such rejection of your hand, you are secured the half of your estate. The remaining half I refuse to touch, but in this case I must appeal to your good nature. I entreat you to let me make it yours by deed of gift and so give you back your own, after which I promise—to pass out of your life for ever."

Perhaps if he had not uttered those last words, Joan's suffering brain, in which Despard's voice and the raging wind and sea seemed hopelessly mingled, might have denied her the power of speech, but he said that, and then stung to madness by a glance at her tortured face he added cruelly:

"The money will be yours unfettered by any conditions, you understand. You will be free to do as you like with it or yourself—to marry Lord Cavana for instance if——"

She interrupted, crying out in her pain piteously—

"Oh! you are hard, merciless—as death. Will nothing—nothing quench your resentment, would you carry it beyond the grave—your human vengeance, your imperfect idea of justice, through those mighty portals which have closed upon the evil doer and the wronged? Ah, I forgot—forgive me," she raised her clasped hands to her head. "I—I accepted your hatred. I asked you to visit your anger on me, and you pardoned him—I must not forget that. Forgive me."

"I gave forgiveness when a penitent man entreated it." Despard's voice had changed; the girl's cry, her piteous gesture, her eyes, affected him as she little guessed, and it was with a last instinct of self-defence that he spoke once more rapidly. "I forgave your father fully and I am not so vengeful as to resent on you his sins. But you voluntarily became my enemy, with your own lips you wronged me. Had I never been weak enough, garrulous enough, to pour out my story into your willing ears, had you not deliberately feigned sympathy, ignorance and interest, I should have had one grievance the less. Had you vouchsafed me one hint that you knew my wretched history, aye far better than I ever did, all my life might have been altered, but you elected to deceive me. You feigned ignorance and sympathy and after that, after the whole hideous truth had become apparent to you, you gave your laughing careless encouragement to the hopes whose utter vanity you knew so well all the time. No woman is ever blind in these matters. I hold that no woman ever leads a man to such ruin and desolation as you led me into without knowing what she is doing. At the time I first confided in you I was not so far gone but that a little honesty, a little womanly candor on your part, could have saved me from——"

He bit his lips, fiercely struggled with himself, and again his voice after a moment's pause rang out hard and stern—

"You deliberately led me blindfold to the edge of the precipice and then with your own hand you hurled me down. It is vain to ask why you did this evil to the man who had already suffered (one might have thought sufficiently) at the hands of you and yours; whether it was insatiable love of conquest or innate love of cruelty which prompted you, matters not—now."

"It does, it shall matter. Your should not speak to me, look at me, like that. Your pitiless injustice forces from me the truth which I would have spared you. Listen to it, hear it then." Fast and passionately Joan spoke, wrenching her hands asunder, and flinging them out, with a gesture casting aside self-control. "As—you have promised that we shall never meet again, you shall have the whole truth you crave for, now. I feigned no ignorance when I heard your story, for I had never heard word of it before. I gave you sympathy because I had nothing else to give." Her eyes, downcast, did not see the look in his as he heard and misinterpreted those latter words. "I had never—then—heard the name of Robert Lucas in my life. I had known no other name for my father or myself than Maynard; Frederick Maynard, he was called. I had suspected no dark secrets in his past, he had always been an upright and honest man during my lifetime. I believe," she cried, her loyal love for her dead giving her a moment's calmness, "that he had been a different man since his marriage with my mother; he had truly repented of his early sins, and those attempts at atonement which you so harshly rejected were the outcome of real penitence, but—but I know nothing. I heard no word of your history until your lips told it to me."

"Can I believe this?"

Despard had wheeled round; he stood with his back towards Joan, his face turned towards the mouth of the cave, up to which the gray-green waves were now dashing; his arms were folded upon his heavily rising and falling chest, his teeth were set.

"Believe what you like, you shall listen to all. I left you at the Grange, as you remember, and I went home to nurse my father; he was unable to move, and when he required some particular papers, he sent me to his desk to find them. I had never been to that desk before. I found

the papers, but in my search for them I came across something more; in a secret drawer I found a letter in handwriting which I recognized at once as yours."

Despard started as she made that admission, but Joan did not see.

"It was the letter you wrote to Robert Lucas, forbidding him to continue his benefits to you, and upbraiding him for what he had already dared to do. At first I could make nothing out of it; your signature was clear enough, but the man, Robert Lucas, was unknown to me, then I saw the address was my father's, and a horrible suspicion leaped into my mind; maddened by it, I searched the desk farther (if I did wrong I was at once and bitterly punished), until I found enough to turn my dreadful fears into certainties. My father noticed my length of absence and the look on my face when I returned, and I said sufficient to acquaint him with my suspicion. His manner and his eyes convinced me that it was truth. But we never touched on the topic again until he lay on his death-bed, and blindly and blunderingly I tried to help him make restitution.

"I came back to you—at the Grange—with my mind made up. All question of marriage between us was for ever at an end. I may say now—I may say anything now"—she flung out her hands again with that impassioned gesture which seemed to her some relief—"that—that I had intended to accept your offer. Of course, I knew you loved me; of course, I had encouraged you purposely because—your love seemed to me the thing that would make life perfect. But—all that was at an end. Would you wish to marry me when you knew whose child I was? A thousand times, no. I looked it all in the face before I made my unalterable decision. If—by the sacrifice of my life—I could have undone that thing I had ignorantly done, viz., heaped fresh injury upon your head, I would have given my life, I tell you, gladly. I gave instead something more precious—my truth.

"I lied to you. Could I have told you the whole truth, contempt and loathing would have slain your affection, but my father's secret was not mine to betray, his honor was mine to guard. So I lied to you. I thought, rightly, that if you believed me false and heartless, despicable and unwomanly, you, with your rectitude and will, would tear me out of your heart, cost what it might. So I told you I cared nothing—while my heart was breaking. I scoffed at your pain, while my heart measured its every pang. I made you think me that base, wretched, unwomanly thing, a jilt. I did it, as I would have done even a harder thing, to shorten the suffering I could not prevent. And I succeeded."

She choked, but she forced her voice on again.

"You believed what I wished, you have torn me from your heart, and—that is all, Mr. Despard." With a pathetic attempt at dignity she lifted her head and moved away. "You can believe as much or as little as you please, but, as Heaven above is our witness, I have told you the truth to-day." That pitiful humiliation overcame her again, the sweet eyes drooped, the lips trembled. "I so hoped, I so fervently hoped that my father's dying atonement might be accepted. I thought he was giving you back your own. I thought we should be free, he and I, from that miserable shadow of ill-gotten wealth. He made a mistake in bringing in my name, but he was weak and in terrible pain, remember, he stood within death's door. Pardon his mistake as you forgave his sin. Regard the spirit of his atonement rather than the letter. Mistakes—can be—set right."

Her voice went off faint and whispering; the cave and the sea alike rose and fell before her; blindly she stretched out her hands for some support, and instantly were they grasped by two other hands, which held them so closely, so firmly, that the cave stood still.

"Mistakes can be set right—sometimes. This mistake can be rectified, but only in one way," spoke Despard.

"Yes—yes," sobbing and entreating. "You will take that way?"

"I will take that way. It is this way."

She was folded in his arms, she was pressed to his heart, closely, passionately strained there, while his kisses fell like rain upon her lips and hair and eyes, and all this before she had time to make a protesting sound or gesture. Did she wish to protest? A great wave of rapture surging over heart and senses made her dumb and helpless. She rested there—in that strong support—like a tired weeping child in its mother's arms. All the cruel pain and weary dragging misery faded into a dream from which she awoke to hear that rich vibrating voice, whose tones stirred every one of her heart-strings and aroused each to response; she heard it say—

"There is only this way, believe me, darling, out of our dilemma. You and I must share alike—money, love, life. Marriage for you and me will cut the Gordian knot of our perplexities, and married we must be, because only then—can I hope to make my atonement." His voice thrilled and lowered. "Only by dedicating the remainder of my life to the task can I hope to atone to you for the base injustice I have done you. My sweet, I was ignorant and presumptuous in my fancied knowledge. I did not know that woman could be so nearly akin to angel. I did not know, I could not comprehend, how unselfish, how devoted, how great and noble in self-sacrifice, such a woman as you could be. I do not ask you to forgive me yet, dearest, I only ask you to marry me. By and bye—in years to come, when I have proved my gratitude, my worship, my penitence—I will dare to ask——"

"You dare a good deal now it seems to me," Joan interrupted gaily, raising her face, which was all transformed, so radiant, so brilliant, so exquisite in its loveliness, that Sebastian Despard gazed at it for a moment enraptured, then fell to kissing it again.

"Oh! my love, my beautiful darling, my own."

"Not yet. Oh, I know you have taken possession, and I know possession is nine-tenths of the law you uphold, but I have a few words to say, Mr. Despard, 'ere everything, including myself, is taken for granted."

"Speak," he smiled. "I am all attention."

"Answer," she said, "as if you were in one of your favorite law courts, and had taken one of those oaths in which your soul delights. Tell me truly, is there now in your mind one single thought or feeling of honor or compassion, or pity, or gratitude, or duty, or chivalry?"

"Not one," Despard replied unhesitatingly. "I am ready to swear it."

She received such awful confession with complacency.

"Then what is your mind and heart full of?" she enquired craftily.

"Love, only love. Selfish love, if you will have the truth. Selfish adoration of you, whom at this moment I worship a thousand times more than ever I did; a selfish yearning for fulness of happiness for myself—all for myself—which you alone can give me. And yet it is not altogether base, this love of mine. Selfish it is, I acknowledge, for even if your welfare required it, I do not think I could let you go now. And passionate it is I own, for I am human, and you are the most beautiful woman the world ever saw, but yet it has in it nobler elements, reverence such as one would give to one's patron saint—respect, admiration for nobility of character surpassing admiration of physical charms. I worship you, darling. I love you with all my soul and being. You must believe this," in deep, thrilling earnestness.

"I am afraid," said Joan, with a bewitching shake of her head, "I am only too ready to believe—what I wish. I blush for myself," and here she did blush so enchantingly that her lover perforce caught her into his arms again, after which interlude: "For my study of man has taught me that if he is anything, he is a deceiver, and in proof of such sad truth I know that only five minutes ago I felt sure—certain—that you cared no more for me, Sebastian, than——"

"You had led me to believe you cared for me."

"And how much do you suppose I care for you now?" with sweet, demure, upraised eyes.

"Tell me. Let me hear you say it," he pleaded earnestly.

She shook her head again, but her eyes still meeting his grew sweeter.

"I love you more than you deserve, I fear. I love you more—much more than one man in a hundred is worthy to be loved. I am sure I can't tell what the result will be. I know how bad for a man is any undue elation, and you do look elated, Sebastian," regarding him with anxiety.

"I am elated," calmly. "I defy any man to stand in my position"—here he improved it by drawing the unresisting figure closer, until the shining head rested on his breast, and his lips rested on the shining hair—"without sensations of elation. You must bear with me, sweetheart, in this."

"I will try," with a mock tragic sigh—then, a glance, oh! such a glance. "I will also endeavor to correct all in you of which I disapprove. Now that I promise, Sebastian."

"You correcting angel. You will not hesitate to point out my faults—plainly?"

"I will not, unless the task becomes too heavy. You must not resent it if I overlook one or two. Dear me, what a storm is raging."

"So there is," assented Despard, noticing the fact for the first time.

"Storm or no storm," said Joan, picking up her ill-treated hat, "we must rush home, or the sea will be in here and wash us out."

"Let me do that," pleaded Despard, arranging the cloak and hat with much care, time, and clumsiness, then suddenly he looked aghast.

"What is the matter now?" quoth Miss Joan.

"Did not you tell me a short time back—an hour ago," with legal accuracy, "that you were suffering from neuralgia? My darling, you ought not to go through this rain."

"My darling," smiled the happy girl, nestling against his shoulder, "I will tell you, I don't believe it was real neuralgia at all, but heartache caused by—well, out of consideration for you I will forbear to state its cause."

"It has gone, entirely gone, my Joan?"

"It has gone entirely—for ever."

CHAPTER X.

WHEN through the pelting rain and the blustering wind, a betrothed pair returned to her, Lady Lea had much to say. First she informed those two whom it principally concerned that they owed their ridiculous and too apparent happiness entirely to her good offices, and when they accepted such doubtful assertion with the most touching gratitude, she, taking advantage of their condition of mind, invested herself with authority.

"We will all three return to The Grange to-morrow. I have neglected Josh shamefully (Josh will be quite pleased by your good fortune, Mr. Despard), and I am sure if you have any consideration for your fiancee you will not wish her to remain in these hideous rooms."

His attention being called to the fact that he was in a room the man of law looked around and shuddered obligingly.

"Also, if you have now influence over Joan, Mr. Despard, I beg that you will persuade her to gown herself properly. Look at her and tell me if human being was ever more disfigured by raiment than she at this present moment."

Nothing loth the lawyer looked at Joan, but the flower-like face, the radiant eyes, the enchanting smile, blinded him to aught else, and he delivered himself of the weak opinion, that Joan looked so lovely in anything it was difficult to pronounce upon her dress.

"You will never rise to the Bench," pronounced her ladyship with fine contempt. "Our Judges are expected to give judgment upon the cut and fit of our gowns now-a-days, and there is simply neither cut nor fit in that thing Joan is arrayed in. But go your way and pack them up, Joan, pack up all your nasty cheap clothes this very evening and I will telegraph to my dress-maker to meet us at The Grange on arrival and supply you with one decent dress forthwith. I suppose as the wedding is so near you won't require many of those trying black garments? Is the wedding to be very soon?" she enquired cunningly.

Joan became deliciously embarrassed. Despard rose to the occasion.

"I think we cannot do better than leave all our arrangements in your hands, Lady Lea. We already owe you much that——"

"I will undertake a little more." Julie accepted her undeserved care unblushingly. "Very well, leave all to me. We will have the wedding from the Grange, of course, and I will arrange every detail myself. You two will be much taken up by—by conversing with each other, and—er—looking at each other, no doubt and the legal business I fear I must leave to you, but I will arrange all about dates, and trousseau, and wedding guests, and so forth. You shall have no trouble, not one bit, in the matter."

"Nor any voice, I foresee clearly," laughed Joan.

Whereupon her ladyship crushed her.

"If after looking carefully into the past you consider yourself competent to order your own affairs, Joan, you can dismiss me from their management."

"Let us be married first," pledged the lawyer.

When the two ladies were alone, Lady Lea regarded her dearest friend meditatively.

"I don't half like it, Joan. You beautiful creature, it is like throwing you away, but what else could we do? I ask you in all sincerity, in the face of the terrible complication in which everything was involved, what better course could either you or I adopt?"

Joan smiled, such a smile, and the face it illumined looked so exquisitely fair that Lady Lea the more regretted that lost place in the peerage.

"What other course could have ensured for me happiness, Julie? No other course, nothing more, nothing less, than what has happened to-day could ever have me happy. And from the depths of my heart I thank you, dear kind friend," here she rose and twined two soft arms around Lady Lea's neck, and laid one hot blushing cheek against my lady's cool pink one, "I thank you for what you have done to-day."

"I am glad you are grateful. I suppose," dubiously, "there are attractions in Mr. Despard which meet not the general eye, merits and so forth, hiding like the modest violet from public gaze. But now, Joan, to-day while you are in this sweetly-contended mood, pledge me your solemn word that if ever, in years to come, you know, you regret this marriage you are determined to make, you will hold me blameless. I sent for Mr. Despard here, I own it frankly, and I lured you to the caves, and sent him after you. Promise to hold me blameless."

"I promise to bless and love you for it always. Oh, Julie, you are a dear, true-hearted, good little woman beneath that mask of cynicism and frivolity it pleases you to put on."

"You will have no precedence, Joan," sighed Lady Lea, unable to banish all thoughts of lost titles. "I had hoped you would go before me."

"Precedence!" with a laugh of fervent scorn. "I shall be first in my husband's heart, and what does any true woman desire more than that?"

"Oh, please carry that kind of talk to Mr. Despard, it will interest him. I have an idea for the bridesmaids' dresses now, I must sketch it out at once. Eight or nine will you have? I think if any dressmaker can be found artistic enough to carry out my idea perfectly, yours will be a sweetly pretty wedding."

So it was; everybody avowed it was the very prettiest wedding anyone had ever seen, and as for the bride, every complimentary adjective was used up, before she had put on her traveling dress and departed from the Grange. One old maid was heard to observe that Mrs. Despard looked too happy—too happy to last, she thought—but Joan's husband found no such fault.

THE END.

Laid by the Heels.

BY A. D. S.

"WHO cashed this check, Megson?" asked the manager of Armitage's Bank, handing the paper across to the cashier.

"That check?" repeated Megson, glancing at it. "Drawn by John Howitt for four hundred and fifty pounds? Why, I cashed it myself this morning. It's all regular, isn't it?"

"Just look at it again," was the reply, "especially at the final 't' of the signature."

Megson adjusted his spectacles in some trepidation, and held up the check to the gaslight.

"I didn't notice that," he exclaimed anxiously. "It looks like a pencil mark, certainly, as if the name had been first written in pencil and then inked over. Good gracious! I hope it's all right. We were very busy at the time, Mr. Warner, and that thick fog coming on so suddenly——"

"It may be all right, as you say; but I think we'd better satisfy ourselves on the point at once."

A messenger was dispatched without delay to the residence of Mr. Hewitt; the signature at the foot of the order was pronounced a forgery. Further investigation showed that a blank leaf had been purloined from the check-book Mr. Hewitt kept in his writing-desk in the library—a book he had not had occasion to use for over a month, all the requisite disbursements during that time having been made through his office check-book.

Although searching inquiries were instituted, nothing could be discovered as to when, or by whom, the blank form had been abstracted. No person known to Mr. Hewitt answered in any particular to the

description Megson gave of the individual to whom the money had been paid.

It was then that Scotland Yard was communicated with, and through this step the details of the case came to my knowledge.

"Hamilton," said Superintendent Beaver calling me into his room, "as you don't start for New York on that extradition business till to-morrow, I wish you'd just see what you can do in this matter. Let's see, here's the cashier's sketch of the woman: 'Dressed in dark clothes, short and stout, snow white hair, red nose, diamond and sapphire cluster finger ring.' He guessed her age at sixty-five, and she led him to understand that the check—endorsed 'Mary Wooler'—was in payment of some house property she had engaged Mr. Hewitt to sell. Pretty clear, that!" with a laugh, "and you can't miss the red nose."

As a ruby-hued nasal organ is by no means the exclusive property of Mrs. Wooler, I thought Superintendent Beaver very sanguine if he expected me to trace her by that feature alone. As it chanced, however, I was more fortunate than I had hoped.

After a long day's rushing hither and thither—to railway stations, banks, restaurants and cab ranks—I lit upon a Jehu who had driven a woman, tallying with the description of Mrs. Wooler, from the Strand to Euston Station. He had reason to remember her, he said, for "didn't I hev to lead my 'oss most o' the way, the fog were that thick, an' didn't she offer me a bloomin' two shillin'!"

From the booking-clerk at Euston I learned that the indignant cabby's fare had taken a first-class ticket for Liverpool.

Elated with my success, I returned to Scotland Yard and reported progress.

"A first-rate day's work," said Superintendent Beaver. "Liverpool, you say? Beyond a doubt the old lady means to quit the country straight away. Let me see, there's no boat leaves for America today—the next one's the Lombardia, which sails to-morrow. That's the vessel you're going by, I think?"

I assented.

"Well, if Mrs. Wooler is leaving England at all—a mere surmise, of course—she'll go by that. I'll telegraph to the Liverpool police to be on the look-out. In case she eludes them, you might keep your eyes open during the voyage."

Nothing had been seen of Mrs. Wooler when I arrived at Liverpool, and a careful scrutiny of every passenger on board the liner convinced me that she was not among them. As I did not intend to let the disappointment interfere with my enjoyment of the voyage, I lost no time in making friends among my fellow-passengers.

Mr. Joshua K. Long and his wife occupied the cabin adjoining mine; Joshua, a thin, lanky man of fifty; his wife, a sprightly little body perhaps ten years younger.

On the other side of me was Mr. Hitchin, a fat, pompous Manchester merchant, and beyond his was the cabin allotted to an elderly spinster, Miss Engelby. The next cabin to Joshua's was that of Mrs. Beslake and her daughter, Anne; the mother being a tall fragile-looking lady, while her daughter, slim and graceful, possessed as pretty a face as it had ever been my lot to look upon.

How vividly I can recall the delightful tete-a-tete Miss Beslake and I had together! If she had been aware that I was only a police officer probably she would have been more reserved, but that fact I had thought well to keep to myself; the captain of the Lombardia alone knew the nature of my errand to New York.

I was standing near the rail, revolving this topic in my mind and making feeble resolutions to deny myself Miss Beslake's company in future, when one of the sailors hastened towards me.

"The cap'n would like to see you, sir," the man said, "in his cabin."

Wondering what could have occasioned the summons, I went below. Mr. Joshua K. Long was in close conversation with Captain Cummin when I entered the latter's cabin.

"A very disagreeable matter, intensely disagreeable," said Captain Cummin, who knew who and what I was. "Mr. Long tells me he has lost a purse containing over twenty pounds in gold—stolen from his cabin this morning. He left the purse there when he and his wife went on deck after breakfast. An hour later they returned to the cabin, and the article had vanished. We've hunted high and low for it, but it can't be found anywhere."

"You suspect no one?" I asked the American, when I had gathered all the details.

"No, I can't say I du," he drawled. "I reckon thar's a few queer folk hanging roun'. That man Hitchin, located next door to you, is gruff as a grizzly, and Miss Engelby's mighty fond o' prying about, but suspect, no, I hevn't the shadow of a reason for suspecting anybody."

"Well," I added turning to the captain, "I don't see what can be done beyond keeping a close watch in future. The thief may be emboldened by his present success to try his games again. As regards Mr. Long's loss, it will be impossible to identify the stolen coins, and by this time probably the purse has been dropped overboard."

For my own part, I was inclined to think that the purse had simply been mislaid, and that it would sooner or later turn up in some corner, hitherto overlooked, of the cabin. At all events, the matter ceased to trouble me.

To while away the tedium of the long and often cold evenings when we could not remain on deck with comfort, impromptu concerts would be started in the music-room, and on these occasions Miss Beslake sometimes sang. She possessed a rich contralto voice which held one entranced—the notes sweet, sympathetic and mellow as a blackbird's. Naturally, when the great concert was organized in the saloon, two days before we passed Sandy Hook, Miss Beslake was asked to take part in it. She readily consented.

As I made my way along the main deck towards the saloon I saw Mrs. Beslake and her daughter just ahead of me. Mrs. Beslake was reading a letter she held in her hand; presently she tore it up and tossed the shreds overboard.

A scrap of the paper, borne upward by the wind fell on the deck at my feet. I could scarcely control the cry that rose to my lips. Stooping, I picked up the fragment and placed it securely in my pocket.

The concert was an unequivocal success; Miss Beslake especially was rapturously applauded by the enthusiastic listeners. Although I had never before seen Miss Beslake wear jewelry of any description, on this night she had a small gold brooch at her neck, and a ring, set with sapphires and diamonds, on her finger.

At the end of the concert, I crossed over to her, and, with a host of other people, offered my congratulations.

"I am glad you enjoyed it, Mr. Hamilton," she smiled. "I felt like singing tonight."

After a short interval I added: "Excuse me, Miss Beslake, but what an exceedingly pretty ring you are wearing. I don't remember noticing it before."

"No," she said, holding it up to me. "I haven't worn it for a long time. It is rather pretty, isn't it?"

I looked at the ring carefully. My fears were confirmed. The ring, undoubtedly, was that described by the cashier of Armitage's Bank as having been upon the hand of Mrs. Wooler, the forger of the check.

I have no distinct recollection of how I got out of the saloon, but I do know that I tossed and tumbled in my berth the live-long night, tortured by rankling thoughts. Before the cold gray dawn stole in upon me my resolution was formed. I flung inclinations to the winds, and determined to take my stand by honor and duty.

Accompanied by Mr. Long, I sought the captain. Taking the torn slip of paper from my pocket, I handed it over to the Yankee, and asked him if he recognized it.

"Where did you get this?" he exclaimed in surprise. "Recognize it? Why, it's part of the last letter I had from my son in Chicago, and I kept it folded up in the purse that was stolen."

"I know you did," I replied. "Don't you remember that your paternal pride in the writer induced you to let me read it when we were off Queenstown?"

"Of course I du. But I guess my paternal pride didn't go so far as to give yeou the hull epistle. Then where did you get this?"

I soon enlightened him on that point. The astonishment of my auditors increased tenfold when I went on to detail the other misgivings that had risen in my mind.

"It's little more than conjecture yet," I concluded, "and I must ask Captain Cummin to help me in confirming it."

"Willingly," said the captain. "How can I assist you?"

"You have keys, I presume, for the various cabins?" I replied. "Mrs. Beslake and her daughter are now on deck. Perhaps Mr. Long would kindly go to them and keep them in conversation for half an hour. In the meantime you and I will see what we can find."

In the cabin of the two ladies my apprehensions received abundant confirmation. With some little difficulty, I succeeded in forcing back the catch of a large portmanteau that stood in the corner of the compartment. The first object that met my eye was a wig of white hair; beneath it lay a box of grease-paints, similar to those used by actors in "making-up."

Mr. Long's purse was not to be seen, but at the bottom of the portmanteau we found a pocket-book containing several bank-notes, the numbers of which agreed with the list given me of the notes paid away by the bank on the spurious check.

We had reached this stage of our search when the cabin door suddenly swung open, and Miss Beslake appeared in the entrance.

"What is the meaning of this—this ungentlemanly proceeding?" she cried, not without a tremor of fear in her tones.

"It means that you are strongly suspected of having stolen twenty pounds from Mr. Long's cabin," replied the captain, awkwardly.

"Suspected!" echoed the young lady angrily. "Do you mean that on bare suspicion you have subjected us to this outrage?" And you, Mr. Hamilton——"

"I am sorry," I said, stepping forward, "but it is more than suspicion with me. The notes I hold in my hand are part of the proceeds of a check forged on Messrs. Armitage's bank. How came they in your possession?"

It is needless to describe the scene that ensued; even now I cannot recall it without a pang of sorrow. Suffice it to say that, on my return to England, I had three prisoners under my care—Mrs. and Miss Beslake, as well as the man, Tom Purdoe, whose safe custody back to London had been the primary object of my mission. Of him it is not necessary to speak here.

Miss Beslake was identified by Mr. Hewitt as a former governess of his children, she having left his employment a month prior to the presentation of the check. In her confidential capacity she had no difficulty in obtaining access to the library, and so accomplishing her nefarious purpose.

A white wig, an assumed stoop, liberal padding and the judicious use of grease-paint, had afterwards, in the fog-laden air, been sufficient to disguise her effectually. She had stepped into the carriage at Euston a decrepit old woman, and issued from it a bright and agile girl. At Liverpool her mother had met her, Mrs. Beslake having reasons of her own for not wishing to be seen in London.

There can be no doubt that in reality Mrs. Beslake was the prime mover in the whole disreputable affair; for at the trial, before sentence was passed upon them, it was conclusively shown that she had more than once served terms of imprisonment for similar offences.

MISDIRECTED PHILANTHROPY.—Nowadays, when philanthropy is the favorite fad of those young women who are burdened with worldly advantages and unworldly consciences, the girls are having some curious experiences.

There was one young person possessed of a pretty face, a kind heart, and an all-absorbing desire to do something to assist her fellow-beings. After some eloquent persuasion she obtained the consent of her family to enter a hospital to study for the work of a trained nurse.

It was with some misgivings that they permitted the experiment, for they were not consumed with the same zeal to benefit mankind.

Among the pretty enthusiast's first patients was a young man with a broken arm and a somewhat disturbed temper. The demure nurse waited upon him kindly and soothingly, and, with sundry home-sick remembrances of her own brothers to prompt her, asked him one day if there was nothing she could do for him—no book she could read, no letters she could write.

The patient gratefully accepted the latter offer, and the nurse prepared to write from his dictation.

He began with a tender address to his "dearest love," and the little nurse felt slightly embarrassed; but she reflected that it was probably more trying for him to write his love letters by proxy than it was for her to hear him.

So she continued through the most ardent declarations of all absorbing affection to the end, where he wished to be subscribed an adoring lover for all time. Then she folded the letter and slipped it into its envelope.

"To whom shall I direct it?" she asked.

The wicked young man said amiably and even tenderly—

"What is your name, please?"

Bric-a-Brac.

THE DAYS.—With the natives of Burmah it is a belief that people born on a Monday are zealous; on Tuesday, honest; Wednesday, quick-tempered, but soon calm again; Thursday, mild; Friday, talkative; Saturday, hot-tempered and quarrelsome, while Sunday's children will be parsimonious.

SCRAP BOOKS.—Charles Reade is credited with starting the scrap-book fad, but many such famous Americans as Chauncey M. Depew, Dr. O. W. Holmes, Joseph Jefferson, Edwin Booth, Rev. T. De Witt Talmage and Roswell P. Flower are said to have begun compilations of that kind long before the British novelist made it the vogue.

TO PREVENT THE COCK CROWING.—Poets and nursery rhymesters alike have encouraged the notion that the cock crows only at break of day. They talk of chanticleer proclaiming the dawn, and so forth; but as a matter of fact—though it is quite true this bright particular barndoor fowl is very fond of saluting the dawn—the cock likes to hear the sound of his melodious voice at all hours. There is one simple device, however, by which even he can be reduced to complete and acceptable silence. The bird cannot crow unless he is able to stand erect and raise his head to the fullest extent. Now, if a plank, or even a lath, be placed above his perch so that he cannot gain an upright position, he cannot possibly lift up his voice, but, on the contrary, must, as Sam Weller expressed it, remain "dumb as a drum with a hole in it."

EGYPTIAN DONKEY "BOYS."—The donkey "boy" is one of the chief features of Egyptian cities. He is not always a lad. Some "boys" are old enough to have big boys of their own, but they are nearly all active, and will run alongside their donkeys for a whole day and show few signs of distress at the end of it. Yet their food is only oil and a bread made of maize and bean flour. Except when "doing" the Nile and the more distant towns and ruins on its banks, most of the sight-seeing in Egypt is done on donkey-back. The animals are wonderful goers. One curious habit their masters have. Every time a donkey commits a trespass its owner cuts a piece off an ear. Thus it is quite common to see a donkey without any right ear at all and with only a fragment of the left, while some have lost both lugs.

MARKED FISHES.—People are so accustomed to look upon the "Finnan haddie" as a toothsome breakfast relish, that it will be news to them that the fish has associations of a highly romantic character. If you look at a fresh haddock, you will notice dark patches on its shoulders. Sometimes these are joined together by a dark line, from which feature the Romans gave them the name of Asinus, or Ass, because it resembled the stripe on the donkey's withers. But other folk account for these dark spots in quite another way. They say the haddock was the fish that Peter caught in the sea of Galilee, when he was bidden (St. Matthew xvii. 27) capture the first fish that came up and take the tribute money out of its mouth. In doing this the apostle marked its sides with his thumb and finger, and these marks afterwards became the permanent decoration of the haddock tribe in commemoration of the event. Unfortunately for this story, the haddock is not found in the Sea of Galilee.

THE BATTLE OF THE WAVES.—Of all the Swiss lakes the Lake of Lucerne has the most irregular shape, its many bays running north or south, east or west. Owing to these windings it is often exposed to violent storms, but while in one bay the waters may be lashed into perfect fury, in an adjoining bay not a ripple will disturb the surface. Thus when a strong south wind blows down the Bay of Uri, the very same wind, turned from its course by the mountains, comes from the west from the Bay of Buochs. There is a point, just opposite Brunnen, where the two sets of waves meet, and then a terrific contest ensues for mastery. At such a moment the spray is driven into the air in vast sheets to a height of fifty feet or more. While the battle rages there may be seen under the shelter of the promontory at Treib several of the lake steamers and a whole fleet of fishing and small boats waiting for the tempest to pass. So violent is the motion that even on large steamers cases of sea sickness are not unusual. The experiences gained in facing such dangers have made the boatmen of the lake famous from the earliest times.

"LITTLE HINGES."

BY E. C.

"Mighty doors on little hinges
Oft with ease and smoothness swing."
So it is from merest trifles
Often great events will spring.
Little, thoughtless words and actions
Hold a pow'r none can foretell;
They are but the tiny seedlets
From which later growths will swell.

If that word were cruel spoken,
If that deed were mean and bad,
Surely their results could only
Serve to make the angels sad.
Oh, by life's most trifling actions,
If they are but kind and true—
By each soft word gently spoken—
How much good we each can do!

With None Between.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOVER AND LORD," "WITH A ROD OF IRON," "A MAD LOVE," "DOLLY'S LUCK," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IT costs her a supreme effort to speak the honest words, but the light mocking laugh with which the man receives them strikes her like the cut of a whip, bringing the blood back to her cheeks and the quick light to her eyes in one indignant glow.

"My dear supersensitive Kitty," the man exclaims, still smiling and trying to draw her reluctant hand within his arm, "do you really think you are bound to make such confessions as these? If we stay here while you recount the story of your conquests, and favor me with a list of rejected suitors, I am afraid we shall hardly get indoors to-night."

The girl does not answer, her heart is too full—she moves on in proud resentful silence; but it is Lord Archdale's turn to detain her now.

"Forgive me, dearest, if I seem to make a jest of what is serious to you. You cannot think it is pleasant for me, a jealous man by nature, to hear of the men who loved you—and may love you still, even though you sent them away—for you did send them away—this Oscar Clifford with the rest?"

"Yes—I sent him away," Kitty echoes drearily; "but——"

"That is enough,' Lord Archdale interrupts with eager haste and an air of conscious magnanimity that nearly maddens the unhappy girl. "My dearest Kitty, do you think that if I did not trust you entirely I should love you so well? An attempted explanation is an insult between us two—let us never mention this subject again. I have something pleasanter to talk of just now. You were saying the other day you had never been in the South of France?"

"No!" Kitty's big eyes dilate, her heart sinks within her with a sick and deadly terror.

"And you would like to see it? I intended that you should, my darling when I heard that half-expressed wish; but fortune has enabled me to gratify it and myself in a curiously easy way."

"Yes," the monosyllable of assent is as frightened and faintly spoken as that of dissent had been. But obtuse Lord Archdale hears and understands nothing, and goes blandly and pleasantly on.

"I met my old friend Sir Cornwall Grene in town the other day, and, knowing that he had spent many years in Cannes and Nice, began to talk to him about the neighborhood and the chance of finding a villa there. I had not intended any hint, I assure you; but in the kindest and promptest manner he at once placed his own at my disposal for the next three months, pressing it on me in his peremptory soldier fashion when I made some slight demur; so at last I was forced to consent. And now I expect a proper 'thank you' for that piece of news—since you know of course what it means?"

"It means!" the girl echoes blankly.

Lord Archdale laughs again.

"Is it so hard to understand, Kitty? It means change from this gloomy frost and chill and damp to a blue sky and warm sunshine. It means that our honeymoon will be spent among the pines and olives and orange trees of the Esterelles. This is my news—now for my reward!"

He stoops and kisses her, and, as the gray moustache touches the white quivering lips, Kitty Jephson feels that her doom is sealed and ceases to struggle with an adverse fate.

* * * * * * *

"Well, proverbs provide for the sunshine and the rain; but you are to be a snow-bride, Kitty; and what sort of fortune does a white wedding presage?"

Mrs. Jephson looks out of the window with a shiver much less affected than usual as she put the question, and wraps her fur-lined wrap about her slim person with something like a groan.

It is a wild white world upon which she looks; the sullen gray sky hangs so low that it almost seems to rest on the tall tree-tops. For the moment it is not snowing; but the bitter north wind whistles eerily among the bare branches of the trees, and every now and then a thin gray drift comes floating down from the leaden clouds, which frown so darkly, upon the desolate white waste.

It is the most unpromising, the most hopeless of wedding-days. As Helen Jephson thinks of the long dragging drive along the frozen roads, the long service in the ill-warmed country church, and, above all, of the utter havoc the dull sky and white ground will work in her delicately-tinted and, in happier circumstances, most becoming dress, tears of sheer vexation rise to her eyes.

"Really it is too bad, Kitty!" She lets the curtain drop upon the wintry scene without, and comes shivering and cross into the warm glow of the firelight, where her step-daughter is patiently enduring the last finishing touches at the hands of her maid. "Really it is too bad! One would think even you would take some interest in the weather on your wedding-day, for your own sake. I do not expect you to take an interest in any one else, and of course the bride suffers most on such occasions. I have seen the handsomest brides—girls who were downright beautiful—look positively hideous between the glaring snow and the dead whiteness of their dress—quite ugly enough to make a bridegroom change his mind at the last moment."

A smile, so wild and strange that it attracts even Mrs. Jephson's self-centred attention, flits across the girl's face. She is looking not "hideous," as her step-mother kindly suggests, in her perfectly-fitting robe of snowy satin and veil of misty lace, but pale and worn and tired, with purple rims around the big dark eyes, and a curious compression of the lips, which have lost all their ripe freshness and vivid bloom.

"I am sorry for the snow, Helen," she says quietly; "but hardly afraid of the calamity you predict. Lord Archdale knows his own mind by this time."

"And you know yours?"

"And I know mine!" The dark eyes that Mrs. Jephson studies so inquisitively do not droop; but somehow the sadness lying in their sombre depths touches even her. For once the selfish narrow-natured woman feels and yields to a kindly impulse. She rests one hand on her step-daughter's arm, and says, with genuine earnestness—

"Kitty, I am sorry now that we have not been better friends. The fault is all mine, for I forced enmity upon you, and you have always been a generous foe. I hope—what shall I say?—I hope you will be happier in your husband's home than I have let you be of late years in your father's."

It is some sudden swift conviction that her honestly-expressed hope will never be fulfilled that forces it from Mrs. Jephson's lips, and this in some queer instinctive fashion Kitty comprehends. But she accepts the amende honorable all the same—even accepts it with something like real gratitude. She is so sore-hearted and miserable to-day, so frightened of the future—that strange unknown life to which she binds herself to-day—that she clings with a childish fondness to even the least-loved relics of the past.

"Thank you, Helen; it is kind to say that to-day," she answers hurriedly, vainly trying to keep back the tears that threaten her hard-won self-control. "Perhaps after this we may be better friends, but somehow the future seems all a blank to me."

The bridesmaids come fluttering in with much rustle of silken skirts and clinking of high heels at this moment, full of exclamations of horror at the weather and admiration of the bride, whom nevertheless, in their secret hearts, they consider to be looking by no means as she should.

"As white as the snow and as gloomy as the sky," Lillian Carr whispers to her sister, as they take their seats in the carriage that is to convey them to the church. "I call this a freezing sort of ceremony in more senses than one."

Bad as the day is, the little church is by no means empty. All the poor folk about in whose houses "Miss Kitty" has been a familiar and welcome visitor from the days of her earliest girlhood, are there to see her married, and such of the neighbors as are not invited guests have braved the snow and north wind to be present as spectators at least.

Lord Archdale, standing in his character of expectant bridegroom on the altar steps, has been the object of a good deal of more or less friendly criticism during the somewhat tedious wait. Could he translate the little buzz of talk that mingles harmoniously with the organ's drone, he would learn that, in the opinion of the villagers, he is "too old and stiff and cross-looking for our Miss Kitty, who has had quite enough of being kept down;" and in that of the more exalted neighbors, "that, though Lord Archdale is a very aristocratic-looking man, and has no doubt been handsome in his day, yet there is something decidedly repellent in his face."

But the general verdict, as a matter of course, is not pronounced aloud, and, even if it reached him, would not much trouble Lord Archdale's peace.

He is not thinking of the curious crowd as he stands with the direct ray of the gas-jet falling upon his handsome face—the face that looks older and graver than usual to-day. He is not even thinking of the bride who in a few moments now will take her place beside him and swear to love and honor and obey him "till death them do part." His thoughts have flown back to the past—to another wedding-day and another bride—and it is with a thrill of superstitious terror he fails to wonder where Stella Wentworth is, and whether any instinct warns her of the crime that he is about to commit.

He is accustomed to the thought, and accustomed to banish it by sheer force of will, as he does now, saying, with his accustomed cynical contempt for the motives that sway mankind—

"Bah, what does it matter whether she knows or not? She dare not speak, for her own sake, for the child's. She would have to keep silence if she were present here to-day. How thankful I am for Master Georgie Wentworth's existence! He is a tower of strength and shield of adamant to me. But for him——" He pauses, drawing his breath sharply in. "Well, she would be mad enough to do anything if his interests were not at stake; but, while they are, she is engaged and bound indeed. By George, I almost wish she were here to-day! To be married in the presence of his own wife is an experience that can fall to the share of not one man in a thousand, I should say; and the scene would be such a splendid bit of tragi-comedy as I hardly care to miss."

But, notwithstanding, his bravado, Lord Archdale starts a little nervously at the sound of the swinging door. It opens however only to admit Kitty, leaning on her father's arm and followed by her attendant maids. There is a pressing forward of all heads, and a disappointed whisper that "Miss Kitty don't look near as handsome as usual, or as happy as she should do on her wedding-day."

Then, as the bustle subsides, Mr. Monk opens his book, the bridal pair take their places before him, the guests group round, and the solemn service begins.

Like one in a dream, Kitty listens to the familiar words. She has heard Mr. Monk read the marriage-service so often it hardly seems to have special reference to her. She looks with soft dazed eyes into his face as he half turns to her with the words—

"I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful Day of Judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that, if either of you know of any impediment—any impediment——"

His voice wavers and breaks over the last word. She sees a sudden half-angry wonder come into his face, sees him close the book abruptly, and then all at once become aware of tumult and confusion all around.

She looks at Lord Archdale. His face is of a ghastly gray pallor, and like a statue, apparently incapable of speech or movement—does not speak or move, even when a man's voice rings out in quick tones of imperative command—

"Stop the marriage, sir! There is a cause and a just impediment here!"

A man's voice! Surely a voice she knows! There is but one voice in the world that could bring that rush of color to Kitty Jephson's face, that could thrill her in this moment of utter hopelessness with a wild rapture of hope. She turns quickly with the thought and finds Oscar Clifford at her side.

He is not looking at her. His blue eyes, flashing with a terrible indignation, rest on Lord Archdale's face. For a moment Kitty thinks he has forgotten the sacred edifice, the presence in which he stands, and is about to spring upon the man who cowers before him with all the abject meanness of detected guilt. But, before she can put her fear into words, he has turned to the puzzled clergyman, and says, in a low tone and with wonderful self-restraint—

"The marriage cannot go on, but, for many reasons, I would rather not explain why in the open church. Could we not go into the vestry now?"

"Certainly," Mr. Monk assents, with a look of helpless wonder; but Lord Archdale, who thinks he detects in this speech a sign of fear on the enemy's part, gathers a little of his lost courage, and, moistening his parched lips, makes a feeble attempt to assert himself now.

"And I say certainly not, sir, with all due deference to you. The interruption has occurred in open church; the explanation shall be given there too."

"You challenge it?" Oscar Clifford cries, with flashing eyes; but he grows a shade paler and his lips quiver in a traitorous fashion, which encourages Lord Archdale to proceed.

"I do!" he says deliberately, his clear, cold, modulated tones distinctly audible all over the church. "This interruption is the outcome of either a gross conspiracy or a monstrous mistake. In either case full explanation must be given at once, or I call on Mr. Monk to proceed with the marriage."

He looks triumphantly round with the last word, for he reads pain, terror, and something akin to despair in the young artist's face; but the triumph changes to deadly terror as Oscar steps aside, with a broken cry of pain and pity, and two women take his place—two women whom he had not noticed yet, but upon whom, from the moment of their entrance, the eyes of the whole congregation have been fixed.

The one is a tall slender girl, whose vivid and striking beauty even weariness and agitation have been powerless to dim; the other, who clings helplessly to her young companion's arm, seems a mere shadow in the gaslit gloom—a faltering fragile figure, veiled from head to foot in sombre folds of crape, and yet a figure that in some strange way seems familiar to all there.

"I must proceed unless some cause is given," Mr. Monk begins, with a nervous glance at the black-robed visitor. "If any one knows just cause——"

"I do!" The broken voice comes through the folds of crape in a sharp sob. "The marriage must not go on!"

"Mere assertion will not do now!" Lord Archdale breaks in, with savage vehemence. He knows the game is lost, but he will not be balked at least of his revenge. "We must have proof, madam—clear and sufficient proof—why the marriage cannot go on!"

"You shall have it, then!" She withdraws the hand her kind companion holds, draw up her wasted figure to its full height, and, throwing back the veil from her wan face, turns to the clergyman with all the dignity of despair. "There can be no marriage, sir, because Lord Archdale is not free to marry; I am his wretched wife!"

An exclamation of horror breaks from Mr. Monk's lips—an exclamation that is evoked far more by the sight of the ghastly face which shows with the spectral pallor of death itself against the crape veil. He does not for a moment think that he is listening to a confession; it seems so much more likely that this evidently dying woman had gone mad and is indulging in more frantic ravings now.

"Pray come into the vestry, Mrs. Wentworth," he says soothingly. "There is some strange mistake that will easily be explained, I am sure."

He tries to take her hand, but she puts his aside with a wild painful smile.

"I am not mad, though you think me so. Heaven has let me live and had spared my senses till I have made some atonement for my sin. I am speaking the solemn truth when I tell you that I am Lord Archdale's wife!"

"But this is monstrous," Mr. Jephson breaks in fiercely—"a mere nightmare of horrors, in which no sane person can possibly believe. Lord Archdale is a gentleman and a man of honor—you are my old friend's widow!"

"And the mother of his heir," Lord Archdale finishes, with his sharp sneering laugh. "Even in your delirious ravings,

madam—for I will charitably suppose them to be nothing more—you should remember that the injury you do be my such a statement is as nothing to that you inflict upon your own son."

Mrs. Wentworth turns upon him then a face that to those who look upon it seems aglow, that tells at once of anguish inexpressible and wild triumphant joy.

"Not now, not now!" she cries in sharp vibrating tones, which rise above and subdue all other sounds. "That weapon has broken in your hands, Lord Archdale; it can never wound or control me more—my boy, my darling is dead!"

"Dead!" Mr. Monk echoes, while Kitty half forgets her own absorbing interest in the scene, as she steals to the wretched mother's side and says in tones of tenderest pity, "Dead—little Georgie dead!"

"Do not pity me!" Mrs Wentworth turns on her with savage passion, horror and anguish shining in the great blazing eyes and ghastly face. "Do not you grieve for Georgie, Katherine Jephson! Be thankful he is dead, for while he lived fear and love for him made me that man's slave, and I—and I—oh, shrink from me in horror, knowing the wretch I am—for my boy's sake, I would have let him commit this cruel and deliberate crime, and ruin your life in worse fashion than he has ruined mine!"

But Kitty does not shrink from the frantic woman, who shrieks out the confession of her own sin with a more frenzied haste as she feels her feverish strength fail. She hardly understands the wrong done or permitted as yet. She only knows that the stamp of death is on the sharpened features; that a mortal agony shines in the haggard eyes; that round the hollow temples, delicate drawn brows, and pinched pale lips, the dews of death are gathering thick and fast, and a great tender pity quells every other feeling in the generous heart.

"Come away, Mrs. Wentworth!" She throws her arm round the frail figure and glances appealingly at Margaret Grandison. "You are ill—you are not fit to be here. Come with me!"

There is no resistance on Mrs. Wentworth's part, she seems past resistance now, the pallid face, with its frame of loosened silvery hair, falling helplessly back on Kitty's shoulder; and the girl is about to draw her away, when Lord Archdale's sharp sarcastic voice pierces the troubled silence

"Really, this is trying our patience and credulity a little too much!" he says, glancing keenly round to see the effect made by this words. "A lady can hardly expect to play such an outrageous piece of melodrama, and then take refuge in a fainting-fit, saving all trouble of explanation. If I understood Mrs. Wentworth aright, she accused herself of being a bigamist, and accused me of wishing to commit bigamy?"

"And I repeat the charge!" Once more the woman staggers to her feet; once more she stands erect—wan, ghastly, terrible, triumphing in the very shadow of death over the man who has made such a cruel shipwreck of her life. "I repeat it here in God's presence and God's house! We have both broken every vow we made at His altar, Frank Maynard! But the law binds us still, while I live you can make no other woman your wife!"

The bond she speaks of snaps with those last words. For one second she stands proudly erect, with something of the old imperial grace in the frail figure, something of the old lost beauty in the ghastly face: for one second she returns the glance of malignant hate he gives her with one full of defiant scorn—the look of a woman who has nothing to lose and nothing to fear. There is the sound of a sharp long-drawn breath, something between a sob and a sigh, and she slips suddenly to the ground.

Kitty, on her knees beside her, trailing her bridal splendor in the dust, draws the gray head up on her breast, while the misty whiteness of the bridal veil enshrouds the incongruous figures, like some pitying angel's wing.

"Oscar!" the girl cries, beside herself with pity and terror.

He quickly comes, but all too late to render any aid. There is one swift uplifting of the eyes, which all in a second have grown glazed and dim, and, bending her ear to the pale parted lips, Kitty thinks she can catch a broken murmur of "Forgive!" But the last shrift of the long-suffering woman has been mercifully short and sharp. In the moment of her supreme agony of expiation, Stella's spirit has fled; it is only the worn-out frame that lies cold and still on Kitty Jephson's breast.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Lost Ideal.

BY S. U. W.

MIRANDA was a charming little girl of seventeen; she was also a bundle of contradictions—cultured and crude, clever and foolish, sentimental and very much alive to the ridiculous. She was also extremely pretty, in the Irish way, which is perhaps the prettiest way in the world. Her father, the Rector, was Irish, and he and all his family were genial, cheery folk, who laughed and grew fat. Miranda was rather ashamed of her own keen sense of fun, which belonged, she supposed, to her "lower nature." She liked to pose to herself as Earnest, with lofty ideals of life, love, and the dignity of womanhood.

Indeed, an ideal Ferdinand (she always thought of him as "Ferdinand") already haunted her maiden meditations—an adorable being, undreamed of in maturer philosophy; a splendid guest, to whom the doors of her heart were to fly open; a Ferdinand who seemed, alas! very unlikely to be cast on the shores of her conventional and dreadfully comfortable little existence.

One September day the beaming Rector whose beams had never been obscured except when his only child's mother died, ten years before, called to Miranda from his study widow.

"Chick!" cried he. He often called her "Chick," and she did not mind much, although the dignity of womanhood might be a little hurt.

Miranda, who was walking in the garden with a rough-edged, parchment-bound poet, stopped and looked up.

"Chick, would you like to come to London with me for a week?"

"Yes, papa," said she, in a little languid voice, and with a dreamy gaze beyond him into infinity.

She had very nearly jumped for joy, but recollected the dignity of womanhood in time, and waited until she got into her own room. Then she did.

They went to the house of her father's sister in London. She was a rich and jively old maid, then gaily curing a backache at some German baths, and spending most of her time with much cheerfulness up to her chin in them.

The happy old parson, who did not often give himself a holiday, enjoyed it thoroughly, and so did Miranda. He took his chick to all the amusing things that were to be had in September, and that were respectable. Among others to a clever burlesque, where Miranda entirely forgot culture, dignity, and ideals, and sixty and seventeen laughed together till they cried.

One morning the Rector had to go into the city on business, and left Miranda all alone. She meant to recline in an easy-chair and read Browning; but she got rather strained over "Sordello," which many who can run cannot read.

Now Miranda, reclining in her easy-chair, found it so much easier than Browning that she fell asleep.

She was shocked at herself when she awoke and found the poet prone at her feet. However, she got up, stretched her arms, and thought she would explore the three drawing-rooms in search of new toys and curiosities, of which her aunt was a great collector.

She came to the smallest room at the end; and even as she crossed the threshold, her eyes fell on—a face! She stopped short, then went forward with clasped hands and stood to gaze. It was only the photograph of a very handsome young man, stuck into the last leaf of a photograph screen standing on a little table; but in that moment Miranda thought she foretasted the rapture of a realized ideal. In those dark eyes she seemed to read genius and sweetness; in that counterfeit presentment she seemed to recognize the Ferdinand of her dreams.

Almost shyly she slipped the fateful carte out of the little screen, without even a glance at its companions there. The image had no superscription; the upper and lower edges of the mount had been pared away to admit of its insertion in the screen. This only added the fitting touch of mystery.

Miranda could not bring herself to replace and resign what seemed almost morally her own, almost heaven-sent. She put the heaven-sent Ferdinand into her pocket; and when the Rector and his daughter went home to the Rectory, Ferdinand went too.

Thereafter Miranda spent much time in contemplation of that sun-pictured face. In point of fact it was a badly-executed photograph, for there was a haziness in some of the outlines, a want of finish in some of the details. This, however, enhanced its significance in Miranda's eyes, and appeared to her to imply a peculiar value in the portrait as a portrait, independent of its merits as a work of art.

Perhaps (she sometimes fondly conjectured) the original was some young poet, hiding himself from fame, holding himself aloof with proud fastidiousness, far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife. The portrait had probably been obtained by stealth by some worshipping amateur photographer.

Miranda passed the winter in trembling expectation, half hoping, half dreading that her aunt would in some of her letters, allude to the missing treasure, and at the same time tear the veil from its mystery; but no such enlightenment came, and in May Miranda was to go and stay in London with her father's sister,

Meanwhile, only two things happened to her at the Rectory. One was her eighteenth birthday, the other an offer of marriage from her father's curate, which it need scarcely be said that she refused, affianced as she felt herself to her ideal.

The curate was a good young man—handsome, too, with good brains, good heart, and good expectations. He was devoted to Miranda, and his sober fancy had never pictured anything so fair and sweet as this reality. She liked him very much indeed, appreciated his pleasant talk, his pleasant ways; but it was quite impossible to idealize him.

The poor young ecclesiastic was very unhappy when she refused him. He never smiled again for at least a week. Then he pulled himself together, went about his business manfully, and, being fond of a certain old versicle, hummed it to himself as he went:—

"Quit, quit for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing will make her—"

Need I say that this excellent young clergyman never hummed the last line of that old versicle, which I also carefully suppress?

* * * * * *

In May Miranda (and Ferdinand) went to London, where the pretty country girl was a good deal admired and enjoyed herself very much. Indeed, she was pronounced bewitching; there was no monotony about her, and there was a touch of innocent coquetry. Truth to say, Ferdinand faded a little from her thoughts at this time, as photographs are apt to fade. Still, no gilded youth had pushed him from his place.

Soon after she reached her aunt's house, Miranda had gone into that third room; but everything there was differently arranged, and the photograph screen had disappeared. She dared ask no questions about it.

One day at breakfast her aunt read a letter that seemed to give her considerable pleasure.

"My dear," said she, "Charlie's coming."

"Who is Charlie?" asked Miranda, who had never heard of him before.

"My dear," replied her aunt rather solemnly, "Charlie is the son of my first and only love; the man I should probably have married if he hadn't preferred some one else."

"Oh, poor auntie!" said Miranda, with ready sympathy.

"Not at all, my dear! I should have been poor if I'd married him, for he would have spent all my money. He married a richer woman, and spent all hers."

"And is he alive now?"

"No, my dear—both dead long ago. He got himself killed by a tiger out in India, and it killed her too. Not the tiger, but the loss of her husband. Indeed then, she was far fonder of him than I ever was. Some well-off uncle looked after their boy, and got him into the F. O. He's been in Canada these three years, and now he writes me word he's coming home, and will be in London next week. So sit ye down, Miranda child, and send him a card for my dance next Thursday."

Miranda did as she was bidden in a little flutter of agitation. An exquisite possibility had occurred to her. Could this be the original? Could Charlie be Ferdinand?

"Is—is he nice, auntie?" she asked tremulously.

"Well, my dear, you'll see for yourself. Oh, yes! Charlie's nice enough, but not so nice or handsome as his poor father, my first and only love. However, that's ancient history now; and there's no doubt I should have been a tried woman. Goodness knows I never grudged him to his wife, and maybe if I'd married him I mightn't have grudged him to the tiger quite as much as she did."

Thursday came; the guests came—more than could ever get upstairs. Charlie arrived early and did get upstairs. His hostess, glorious in green velvet and diamonds, pounced on him, took both his hands, and kissed him before the assembled multitude.

Presently Miranda made her appearance, and, being effusively introduced to each other, they went off to the ballroom together. Miranda's heart beat a little faster when they met; for one moment she had seemed to recognize the beautiful dark eyes of Ferdinand. But ah, no, no! That round foolish face inclined to be chubby, that nose inclined to be snubby, that wide mouth for ever widened by a schoolboy grin! Hyperion to a satyr! And as for those eyes, there was no speculation in them, and it would have been difficult indeed to find genius and greatness in their shadows, thought Miranda, as Charlie prattled inanely at her side.

Miranda went to bed that night vaguely disappointed and unhappy, and had a painful dream of a distorted Ferdinand photographed on a spoon. Charlie came to luncheon next day. Miranda was tired and a little cross; she found him horribly uninteresting. Nice? How could auntie say he was nice? He had not two ideas; he chattered like an ape and was quite as ugly; his eyes were not the least like Ferdinand's. He was an impostor; he bored her; she wished he would go. He and her aunt had all the talk to themselves; Miranda sat by silent and glum, and said she had a headache. She was only half conscious that Charlie was babbling and bragging of his exploits on the ice in Canada; she only half heard what he said when he asked her aunt if she had ever got the photos he sent her a year before.

"Nine of our skating club and the—what do you call it?—you know——"

"Oh, yes," said her aunt; "I got them, and put them all into a photograph screen. It used to stand on a table in the third room upstairs. I dare say it's somewhere up there. Let us go and look for it."

"Photograph screen!" The words woke up Miranda like a pistol-shot. At last—at last! And what was going to happen? Was her sin to find her out? No, she would never confess; but she felt very guilty, and shook in her shoes. However, she managed to walk upstairs in them behind her aunt, with Charlie at her heels.

In the third room her aunt pulled the drawer of a cabinet. "Here it is!" said she, "folded up as flat as a pancake"—and she gave it to Charlie, who unfolded it.

"Yes," cried he, with his wide laugh, "here we all are! But, I say, where's the — the — combination — composite — what d'you call it? Nine of us blended into one, you know—the new dodge. What's become of it? Awfully handsome fellow we made, too. Bit of Brown, bit of Jones, bit of me. By Jove! What's the matter? Are you ill? Here, sit down. Where's the eau-de-Cologne?"

Miranda sat down. She did feel a little faint for an instant while she realized the truth, and Ferdinand melted into space; but then the suppressed fun in her "lower nature" jumped up like a Jack-in-the-box on the phantom heels of the vanishing Ferdinand, and she went off into peals on peals of inextinguishable laughter. They were rather frightened; her aunt slapped her hands, Charlie emptied the bottle of eau-de-Cologne over her, and I am afraid she slapped him.

"Me poor child," said her aunt, "she's hysterical!"

"I'm nothing of the sort," gasped Miranda, trying to stop laughing, going off again, and speaking in spasms. "Oh, oh, oh! it's too, too, too funny! Oh, oh, oh! that I should fall in love—with nine men—at once! No, no, no! with nine—bits of men! Oh, oh, oh! a thing—of shreds and—patches! Oh, oh, oh, oh! shall I ever, ever, ever stop laughing?"

* * * * * *

Miranda went home in July, a merrier and a wiser girl. In October she married her faithful curate, whose only rival had been Ferdinand.

BRIDGEPORT, the home of Barnum's show and the Suicide Club has produced another unique organization, the Anti-Girl Club. Whether or not its members are the same individuals as the members of the Suicide Club is not stated, but if any man has an excuse for dying it is the woman-hater.

COOK (who has just been kissed by a chimney sweep)—"Ah, what happy creatures the cooks in Africa must be! They can get kisses from chimney sweeps every hour of the day and yet no one can ever see the slightest trace of them."

HER ATTRACTIONS.

BY E. MATHESON.

She has no dazzling charms, no classic grace,
Nothing, you think, to win men's hearts about her;
Yet, looking at her sweet and gentle face,
I wonder what our lives would be without her!

We tell our griefs into her patient ear;
She whispers "Hope!" when ways are dark and dreary;
The little children like to have her near,
And run into her open arms when weary.

She holds a helping hand to those who fall,
Which gently guides them back to paths of duty;
Her kindly eyes, with kindly looks for all,
See in uncomeliest souls some hidden beauty.

Her charity would every need embrace;
The shy and timid fear not to address her;
With loving tact she rightly fills her place,
While all who know her pray that Heaven may bless her!

Dolly.

BY E. W. P.

THE furniture of the room, as the habiliments of its occupant, had certainly seen its best days. The apartment was a half living, half studio combination, on the third floor of a house near Oxford Street. On an easel stood a painting, a landscape, with classically draped, or undraped, figures. Here and there about the room were other indications of the painter's art, all equally in the state of a "glory past," as was the painter himself.

His blouse was tattered and torn, and as much out at elbows as was Dolly Ruskin himself. Indeed, the young artist was very much in Queer Street. His fortunes were at the lowest ebb. It was a problem he had not as yet tried to solve—where he should get his next shilling, when the solitary one reposing in his purse had been expended for his dinner.

Nevertheless, the pleasant, well-looking face was as free from care as a millionaire's while his cheery, musical whistle of the bird song in "The Mikado" kept time to the movement of his brush.

Just as he had reached the "Tit Willow" for the twentieth time, there was a tap at the door.

"Come in." Then in a louder key, "Come in. Oh, I beg your pardon, I forgot the door was locked. Is it you, Mrs. Riggs?" as, opening it, he beheld his landlady outside. "Accept my earnest apologies for keeping you waiting. Pray come in; that's the third time."

"As busy as usual, Mr. Rooskin," remarked Mrs. Riggs, who had a system of pronunciation quite unique. "I don't like to trouble you, that I don't, Mr. Rooskin, but what I've come to say is, if you could let me have a trifle off the three weeks' rent owing, I'd be much obliged."

"Mrs. Riggs, I never refused a lady any request that was possible to grant," replied Dolly, seated on the corner of the table, mixing a color on his palette. "Are you aware I am a victim of a cruel destiny, that dogs my steps like a hired bravo? There is a saying, you know, 'Man proposes, God disposes.' Well, Mrs. Riggs, I am disposed to pay your rent, even with interest; but, lo! the powers that be decree it otherwise. Behold"—placing the shilling on the table—"there is my present entire wealth, capital and interest in one. It is not Rothschildian, is it? After that is gone, I shall turn vegetarian from compulsion, and, like Nebuchadnezzar, take to the grass of the field for sustenance. My worthy, but obdurate uncle, would say it was the proper food for an ass. He does not appreciate high art," waving his hand to the picture, "nor does he compassionate the struggles of genius."

Dolly Ruskin was one of the worst paying of Mrs. Riggs' lodgers, when she had them—now he was the only one—but he was her special favorite. Indeed, everybody liked Dolly, his good humor, his frank bonhomie, his sterling worth; and it had been real necessity which had brought Mrs. Riggs up three pair of stairs, with that request for a "trifle on account."

"I wouldn't press you, that I wouldn't, Mr. Rooskin; you're a gentleman, and will pay me when you can, I'm sure," was the response; "but just now there's taxes—they must be paid—and there's the rent, and, as you know, Mr. Rooskin, I haven't a room let but this."

"Which, I fear, isn't a very profitable let, Mrs. Riggs."

"Well, no, Mr. Rooskin; but I'd not mind that, sooner than lose you. Only—only it's a hard world for a lone widow to fight; and when I tug and tug at the two ends, and can't make 'em meet, my heart just seems to give way, and I've sperrit for nothing but to die."

The commonplace voice had suddenly become full of unconscious pathos. The few simple words revealed how hard, indeed, was the fight his landlady was fighting. Yet she had always a smile for him, her worst lodger.

The effect was heightened by Mrs. Riggs trying to remove, unseen, from her right eye a genuine tear.

Dolly Ruskin's features grew suddenly grave. A sharp pang of remorse shot through him. What a thoughtless hound he had been!

"Mrs. Riggs!" he exclaimed, "when do you want the money?"

"To-morrow noon, Mr. Rooskin, would do."

"Then you shall have it. I have said I never break my word"—melodramatically—"never; that is, hardly ever."

"That I'm sure you never do, Mr. Rooskin. As I said, you are a gentleman. Anybody can see that."

"I'm afraid it's a profession that doesn't pay, without an account at one's bankers. But enough of filthy lucre; by the way, I wish I had enough of it. Give me your valuable opinion upon the alterations in my picture. Molière sought the criticism of his housekeeper—I of my landlady."

"It's very pretty, Mr. Rooskin, that it is," replied Mrs. Riggs, placing herself before the easel. "And how you can make it out of all them dabs of paint, I don't know. The fields, and the trees, and the flowers is lovely! but I do confess, Mr. Rooskin, I don't like the figure. It ain't nature; no young woman ever went about in that fashion, I should hope."

"It's classical, Mrs. Riggs, 'The Grace at Five O'clock Tea.' That the third title I've christened it. I give it a fresh one every year, and send it to the most potent, grave, and reverend Academic Forty. Singular, it's always returned; but you see, Mrs. Riggs, it shall hang on the line at last."

"P'raps, Mr. Rooskin, they don't like the erudities, more nor I?"

"The what, Mrs. Riggs?"

"The erudities. That's what Mr. Chrome, your predecessor, called 'em."

"Oh, the nudities."

"Nudities or erudities, it's the same thing. It doesn't so much matter in marble statutes, because in ain't natural. But in pictures—why, it's the color as does it."

"Mrs. Riggs, you ought to be an art critic."

"Lor' bless me, Mr. R., I've hearth crickets enough down in the kitchen, without being one myself. Talking of the kitchen, I shall have the mutton boiled to rags. You won't forget, will you, Mr. Rooskin?"

"Mrs. Riggs, if I beg, borrow, or steal you shall have the money," said Dolly.

"Oh, Mr. R., don't say nothing so dreadful."

"She must have it," he added, when alone; "but where I'm to get it Heaven may know, I don't. For security I have left all my valuables in the care of my 'uncle.' That painting, the child of my brain, is valuable in my eyes, yet he'd not lend five shillings on it. The difference of opinion. My Lombardian uncle's clerk has no eye for color. He said I had too much, and asked if I bought it by the pound. Ye gods! he said that to me, Dolly Ruskin, who gave 'wines' at Cambridge, who started bachelor rooms on a luxurious scale, till my maternal uncle kicked me out as his heir because I preferred following art to the tea trade. So I lost an income and future fortune. Worse I lost my pretty little cousin Bessie. No, by Jove! I haven't lost her. She'll be true, and all may come right at last. But about Mrs. Riggs' cash, I'll take a stroll and see what Providence will send."

Not much. After two, three hours, he found himself no richer, nor with any prospects of being so. He was growing desperate, when, passing through a street of handsome villas, he saw on the wall of one that was being done up, a square board, with "Painters wanted," roughly chalked upon it.

"Painters wanted; was he not a painter? In the higher walks truly; but the higher walks didn't bring him a shilling. Nil desperandum. Why not try the lower? Bosh—stay, all trades were honest. Honester than being in debt to poor old Mrs. Riggs. By Jove! he would try, that he would.

Half seriously, half for the fun of the thing, Dolly hastened home, donned his shabbiest clothes, and put on a false beard, purchased for private theatricals. In a brief space he was in conversation with the foreman.

"See here," remarked the latter, "we're in desperate need, but you don't look the right sort. How do I know you can paint?"

"By ocular demonstration," said Dolly, reaching a brush and charging it with color from a paint-pot standing near. "That door is painted execrably. The fellow's used a trowel, not a brush. Wait. There."

"You'll do. What's your salary?"

"What you give to the others, I suppose. Only I'm hard up, mate, and want a little in advance."

The foreman laughed, with a twinkle in his eye.

"I'll trust you," he said. "I reckon you are hard up or you'd not take to this. When can you begin?"

"At once. Here's the brush, here's the paint, and here's the painter."

"You are the chap for me. We'll start from to-day."

"Oh, Dolly Ruskin, Dolly Ruskin, to what base uses have you descended," reflected the owner of the name, awhile later, mounted on a ladder, he painted, with artistic finish, the balcony before some French windows.

Now the latter were open, and soon Dolly heard a young, fresh voice say.

"Papa forbade Charley the house, so, when I go to my room, he climbs up the lamp-post before it, turns out the light, and makes love from there. Poor dear, he looks wretchedly uncomfortable. Who's that? Gracious, we are overheard!"

The ludicrousness of a man making love from a lamp-post so tickled Dolly that he had burst out laughing. The next instant remembering, like lightning, he slid down the ladder to the ground, and began vigorously stirring the paint. Had he been heard—seen? Cautiously he raised his eyes, a pretty face was peering down at him over the balcony.

Good Heavens! it was his cousin Bessie! Did she recognize him? A cold douche ran down his back. He'd test her.

"You'll find that there paint wet, miss," he called up. "It'll spoil your gown."

The face vanished. She did not know him.

"If she had!" he thought, then with a smile breaking over his features. "By Jove, wouldn't she have laughed?"

* * * * * *

"Daubson" (Dolly's selected name), "there's a long job up at Hampstead the governor's contracted for," said the foreman on the fourth morning. "The best work's to be put in it, so you are to go. It's a house of a big City gent."

"All right. Where is it in Hampstead?"

"It's the Lebanons. What's the matter?"

"Run this knife in my finger, that's all?"

But it was far from all. The Lebanons! That was where his uncle lived. It was his uncle's house. He couldn't go there!

Yet, upon reflection, why shouldn't he? It wasn't likely he would be recognized, and it would be carrying out the lark, for, Mrs. Riggs satisfied, Dolly intended to return to high art and poverty.

The joke was too good to be resisted, and noon found him taking his dinner, in the form of a sandwich and a pipe, under one of the fine old beech trees, where he'd often sat with Bessie, and yes—made love.

Dear cousin Bessie! She loved him. Hadn't she confessed it over and over again? Would he not just like to catch a glimpse of her? He'd like to let her know he was so near. Wouldn't she enjoy the joke? It only was a joke——"

"Hour's up, mate!" called a fellow workman, passing.

"All right, mate," and Dolly resumed the brush.

But that longing to see Bessie increased. He must—he would see her. It would not be difficult to him, who knew the rules of the house from childhood. At ten she would go to her room—a few small pebbles thrown would bring her to the window—a word would bring her into the grounds, where they could talk as long as they pleased.

Hence, grateful for a dark night, at about a quarter to the hour, Dolly climbed the ring fence into the grounds—the grounds which, until a few years ago, he had regarded in the light of his own. Then had come art vs. tea, and he had chosen the former, with poverty but independence.

There was a light yet in the drawing-room, but none in Bessie's chamber. Well, it was still early. He'd have time to stroll round the house. Ah, me! what happy days he had spent in it. What a jolly, good old uncle his uncle had been, until the tea question. Those were his rooms, where he reckoned up all his profits and losses—not many of the latter. Dolly wondered whether—but stopped abruptly in his wonderment to exclaim:

"Hullo! one of my lazy mates has left his ladder at the window. Rather a dangerous thing when there's money kept on the premises. I wonder if I could remove it unheard?"

"What's that?"

He had nearly reached it, crossing cautiously over the grass, when he suddenly became aware that a man was ascending the ladder, and had nearly reached the balcony of the room.

"By Jove! I'm just in time," thought Dolly.

Then it flashed into his mind that it was one of "his mates." He recollected one had told him of a sick wife, and desperate need. Had the poor wretch been tempted to this crime?

"I'll catch him in the act," determined Dolly, "read him a moral lesson, shame him into repentance, and then let him go."

His eyes on the figure, he, too, began to ascend, increasing his speed, as the other, getting over the balcony, disappeared. Two minutes, nay less, and Dolly was looking into the apartment into which the other had vanished. Dolly knew it well. It was his uncle's bedroom, with a communicating door into his private study.

The room was dark, but the door was open, showing the study was lighted. Where was the man?

The question was at once answered by a silhouette form coming between Dolly and the light. Noiselessly the man was making for the study. Noiselessly Dolly followed, growing excited, interested. Now, over the man's bent form, he perceived his uncle, writing at his writing-table, his back towards them.

Then it was all swiftly over, like a dream. The man was in the room, a life-preserver in his grasp. Dolly had moved rapidly on his track. Doing so, his foot had struck some object on the floor. A slight noise, but enough to frighten the other.

He turned, and, scarcely had Dolly seen that his face was hidden by a crape mask, than he made a dart past to escape.

But Dolly was on him in a second, and the two were struggling in each other's grips; two desperate men, as the old man, terrified, staggered to his feet, then shouting, "Thieves! thieves!" rushed to the bell.

At that moment, simultaneously, as Dolly clutched the crape from the man's face, the false hair fell off his own. The recognition was mutual.

"Good Heavens!" ejaculated Dolly, in horror. "Cousin Ted!"

Ere he could recover from his surprise, he saw the ghastly pale terror of the other's countenance change, giving place to a malicious smile, as he felt himself unexpectedly dragged forward, and heard his assailant cry:

"Don't be alarmed, my dear uncle. I've got the scoundrel; I saw him ascending a ladder into this room, and followed. If I hadn't, you'd have been a stunned or dead man by now, and the place robbed. Why," as he reeled back with affected astonishment, "it's Dolly Ruskin, my own cousin! Oh! Dolly, Dolly! that you should be driven to this!"

"Why, you unmitigated villain!" ejaculated Dolly, red with indignation to the roots of his hair. The unexpected and astounding charge had, to use his own term, completely knocked him off his legs. "You have just reversed the matter; it was I who followed you. Uncle, I swear it!"

Cousin Ted burst into an amused laugh, remarking to the old man, who stands trembling, half with passion, half fear, his hands, clenched, gazing from one to the other:

"Cool, upon my word—isn't it?"

"I don't understand—I don't understand!" cried the old man; then, as Bessie ran in, terrified, "Bessie, come here, child—come here."

"Oh! uncle, what does it mean?" exclaimed Bessie. "Oh, Dolly!"

The blood was in here as well as Dolly's face now, for she had recognized the house painter of the few days ago; and he knew she had, and stood confused, wondering, in all this confounded turmoil, how on earth he was to explain. The other speedily seized the advantage.

"It's just this, uncle. I happened to be

in the grounds, and saw a man, by means of a ladder, enter this window; I followed, and found him about to make an attack on you; I seized him, and—thank Heaven! —saved you!"

"It's a dastardly lie!" cried Dolly. "It was he who would have attacked you. Uncle, you've kicked me out, but you know me better than that. I'm poor—awfully poor—but rather than lift my hand against you—pshaw! it's absurd! Bessie, you know it's a lie!"

Cousin Ted laughed cynically, and pointed to the crape, false hair, and life-preserver lying near Dolly, who had forgotten them in his indignant excitement.

"My dear uncle," he remarked, "one of us two, of course, is guilty. Well, a motive is required in any crime. What need have I for money? What motive, either revenge or another, for injuring you? You be our judge."

Dolly saw his cause was hopeless. Even Bessie turned her pretty eyes doubtfully upon him, saying, as plain as lips, "Why was he there in that guise at all?"

"Uncle," he exclaimed, "will you hear me?"

"No, sir," cried the old man, furiously. "I'm not an idiot. What incentive would your cousin have for such a crime? Have I not made him coheir with Bessie in my will? And will not all be his when they are married? Yes, sir, married. Anything you have to say shall be in a court of law, sir—yes, law!"

Dolly did not speak. He looked "Is this true?" at Bessie. She hung her head. Meanwhile Ted interposed:

"No, uncle. No harm has been done. He will not make a second attempt. Pray take no proceedings, for the family's good name."

"You are right, Ted. Go, sir. Not a word—go," to Dolly, "and never enter this house again."

"What, not even to save your life?" remarked Dolly, outwardly calm, but inwardly raging at the impossibility of righting matters.

"It is your turn now," to Ted, "but mine will, mine shall come. This," picking up false hair, "is mine. This is yours," and he tossed the crape towards Ted. "One day, uncle, before it's too late, I trust you'll learn the truth. Bessie, if by compulsion you wed this fellow—I'm sure you wouldn't willingly—you'll wed our uncle's would-be murderer."

Then, turning, he left them.

* * * * * *

What motive had Ted Ruskin, his cousin, to kill their uncle?

That was a poser to Dolly. For a fortnight he had racked his brain over it with no result. By the old tea merchant's death he saw he would have got half his fortune; but, undeniably, would lose Bessie and the other half. As he couldn't make it out himself, he forgave his uncle and Bessie the injustice they did him, only he must try to find out the truth, which he knew. What was Ted's motive?

Dolly had, unexpectedly, got a picture-dealer to buy his painting, "The Graces at Five O'clock Tea." More than that, he had spoken well of it, and commissioned another. Mrs. Rigge was all smiles.

Dolly was never so wretched in his life. With a single shilling in his pocket he had been supremely happy; for he trusted yet to wed Bessie. Now he felt it was hopeless, unless he could unmask Ted. He couldn't. He turned amateur detective, and tracked him, yes, spied upon him.

Was he not justified? But he made no discovery. Apparently Ted was a thoroughly "good boy." Was temperate in his drinks, his pleasures, didn't care for cards. Yet there was a mystery about him. He was looking, when the mask was laid aside, worried and worn.

What was it?

"I'll find out," said Dolly, resolutely. Only he didn't.

Lately Dolly had taken to walking much about London after dark. To those in his frame of mind there is a great comfort in the movements of a big city.

One night, after midnight, he found himself on the Thames Embankment. Leaning on the parapet near one of the landing steps, he looked at the dark moving waters breaking the reflection of the gas-lamps into golden ripples. Abruptly, he was conscious of someone swiftly passing him, then that a woman was rushing down the steps. At the last she paused, and lifted a white, wan face upward. Before she could make another movement, Dolly had her in his arms.

"Good Heavens, woman, what would you do?" he cried.

After the first surprise, she struggled wildly in his grasp.

"Let me go," she entreated. "Why do you stop me? Oh, no, no! When one is so wretched as I, death is so sweet—so sweet. Has not my little babe gone from this cruel earth? Why do you stay me?"

"Because you are mad with some great trouble," replied Dolly, in matter-of-fact tones, "so you don't know the sin you're committing."

"Trouble—trouble!" she moaned. "Oh, how much! Oh, I cannot live. I am penniless, starving. I have no home. They have driven me out because I cannot pay; and my babe, my pretty babe, is dead."

Dolly reflected rapidly, then said:

"Look here. I'll find you food and shelter in the house of a respectable woman I know. You shall tell me all about it. I'll help you if I can. If I can't, the river will not run away. You can jump in and end it all to-morrow."

The tone and words were the best antidote to the woman's excitement. She looked at Dolly in surprise, then bursting into tears, said:

"If you could help me—oh! if you could! I do not want to die, but I have no home but the streets."

"All right, we'll see."

Later on, to Mrs. Riggs' astonishment, she was summoned from her bed to find a strange woman in her parlor.

"Mr. Ruskin," she cried, "what have you done? I really——"

"Now, Mrs. Riggs, be a good Samaritan. Just listen. There," he added, after his recital, "would you have left the poor thing—so pretty, so full of madness from trouble, with a wedding ring, too, on her finger, to take her life?"

"Oh, Mr. R——"

"Well, I couldn't either. So I brought her here. Now, when she has finished eating, you shall hear her story."

What was that story, told with many interruptions, and broken by sobs and bitter outbreaks of weeping? An old, old one. A young girl in love—a man infatuated. A year of happiness, then, on the man's part, weariness of his wife's devotion—so it seemed to Dolly—then gradual desertion.

"For weeks—months together," sobbed the young wife, "he never came near me—never gave me money. I felt that not only had his love died, but he hated me. I bore it all, for I loved him. But when my babe fell ill, it roused me against even him; and I declared, if he didn't treat me better, I'd find out his rich family, and ask them to save my child.

"Then he fell into a rage, and said he'd deceived me; that he hadn't married in his own name. That he had no rich family. But, for my threat, he'd never see me again. He never, never has; so, when my babe died, and I was starving, what could I do but what I did?"

"We'll do better than that," said Dolly. "We'll find this dastardly husband. What did he call himself?"

"Edward Stanley Ruskin."

"Great Heaven!" cried Dolly, springing up from his chair. Then, "By Jove! I've got him now. The reason is clear—the mystery is explained."

At the Lebanons there is an assembly of three. Old Mr. Ruskin, Bessie, and a pale little woman, who has told her story again, and is patted on the shoulder by the old tea merchant, as he says:

"Never you mind, my dear. It's all right now. I've allowed that fellow four hundred a year. He'll not get another farthing, but I shall provide for you."

"And pray, uncle, what will you do for me?" inquired Dolly, sauntering in quite coolly through the open glass doors. "Do you still think it was I who contemplated that murderous attack on you? Are you, my dear ci-divant benefactor, prepared to ask the pardon of the R. A. in future for the wrong you did him?"

"Ask your pardon?—yes, from my heart," cried the old man. "Dolly, you rogue, I'll confess that I've been miserable ever since I disinherited you. Come back again. I'll make you my heir, and you shall marry Bessie to-morrow if you like."

"She'll want weeks for her trousseau," laughed Dolly, while Bessie smiled, blushing; "which will give me time to paint her portrait for the R. A. But, uncle, there is one condition. I must stick to art."

"Stick to what you like, so you stick to me. Art is better, at least, than hypocrisy."

"Now," said Dolly, "I think I saw luncheon was ready."

While the four were discussing it, Cousin Ted entered. He started in amaze, as Dolly rose, only noticing him.

"My dear fellow," said Dolly, "let me introduce you to—your wife."

Ted Ruskin sprang back, went white as stone, then vanished, never to be heard of for months; after that he returned, a humble penitent, to his little wife, who forgave him.

Dolly works in a fine studio now, at the Lebanons, and his wife proudly watches the progress of the pictures, even admiring the "erudition."

His paintings, too, are accepted by the Illustrious Forty—only, as Dolly says, they are all like ledger notes, either above or below the line.

AIR YOUR CLOTHING.—Everyday garments, particularly those that are not laundered, should be disinfected. Brushing is not sufficient, as it does not remove the unpleasant odors that come from long usage. Some women sprinkle their waists and dresses with scent and use sachet powers to perfume their bonnets and wraps. All this would be admirable were it availing. Scent needs to be overpowering to conceal the unfragrant emanations from an old garment. Then the bouquet is fulsome and vulgar.

Better than scent bags or potpourri are a clothes pole and an open window. Turn the garments wrong side out and let the air and sunshine disinfect and deodorize them. All night airing is good, but a day of blowing winds and purifying sunlight is better. When a bonnet lining or a set of dress shields becomes perceptible, it should be removed. Cloth garments can be sponged and pressed clean. A pint of benzine costs 5 cents and will clean anything in the way of kid, silk, lace or worsted. Camphor is another common disinfectant and not half appreciated. If, after brushing the only coat or gown, it is sprinkled with spirits of camphor and aired a few hours, it will be tidy and grateful.

Garments and belongings that smell of nothing are the cleanest and most agreeable. There is always a suspicion of bad health, bad sanitation or bad habits where there is much perfuming. If a scent is desired to neutralise what is known as shop smells, emanating from the laundry, factory, packing-room, etc., orris, muscadine, bergamot or a bit of sandalwood is preferable to the sickly sweetness of manufactured perfumes. Deodorised alcohol with a teaspoonful of scent to a pint, used as a spray, will leave the clothing redolent of neatness. And for the skin there is nothing more aromatic and agreeable than a handful of lavender water.

OVERRATING A SOURCE OF TROUBLE.—A physician warns brain workers against overeating, and states that the breakdown of active brain workers is often caused by the overloading of the stomach, when it is attributed to brain fatigue. He says that hard work, mental or physical, rarely ever kills. If a mild amount of physical exercise be taken, and a judicious amount of food be furnished, the functions attended to, the surface be protected by proper clothing, and a philosophical nature cultivated, an almost unlimited amount of work can be done for an indefinite length of time, bearing in mind always that when weariness comes rest must be taken instead of stimulants, so that there shall be no working on false capital.

THE SIDE SADDLE.—The horrified opposers of the movement for women's riding on cavalier may be interested in learning that had it not been for an accident of fashion, the gentler sex would be striding their horses still, and that the side saddle is not an invention due to the advanced modesty of civilization. It appears that one Anna of Bohemia, eldest daughter of a German emperor, and wife of an English king, introduced the custom, not from delicate repulsion to the old method, but simply because she was afflicted with some sort of deformity, that rendered it impossible for her to ride upon the saddles in common use. In those days it was imperative that a woman should ride; accordingly, the first side saddle was invented. Royalty had then, as now, snobbish followers, ever on the alert to adopt fashions honored by its patronage, and in a few months every woman of position in England possessed a side saddle, and the custom was established.

TEMPERING TOOLS.—The following is the Swiss method for hardening cast steel for cutting tools. Mix in a suitable vessel four parts of pulverised resin and two parts of train oil. Stir well in this one part of hot tallow. Into this mixture the article to be hardened is plunged at a low red heat, and held there until thoroughly cooled. Without cleaning off, the piece is again put into the fire and suitably tempered in the ordinary way. An examination of steel thus hardened indicates that the hardening is deeper and more uniformly distributed than is commonly the case, and that the steel is much less brittle.

Scientific and Useful.

TO REMOVE GREASE.—Aqua ammonia, two ounces; soft water, one quart; saltpeter, one teaspoonful; shaving soap in shavings, one ounce, mix together; dissolve the soap well, and any grease or dirt that cannot be removed with this preparation, nothing else need be tried for it.

TO IMPROVE STOVE POLISH.—Stove luster, when mixed with turpentine, and applied in the usual manner, is blacker, more glossy, and more durable than when mixed with any other liquid. The turpentine prevents rust, and when put on an old rusty stove will make it look as well as new.

SIMPLE DISINFECTANT.—Cut two or three good-sized onions in halves, and place them on a plate on the floor; they absorb noxious effluvia, etc., in the sick room, in an incredibly short space of time, and are greatly to be preferred to perfumery for the same purpose. They should be changed every six hours.

TO REMOVE PAINT FROM A WALL.—If you intend papering a painted wall, you must first get off the paint, otherwise the paper will not stick. To do this, mix in a bucket with warm water a sufficient quantity of pearlash, or potash, so as to make a strong solution. Dip a brush into this, and with it scour off all the paint, finishing with cold water and flannel.

TO SET COLORS.—Salt or beef's gall in the water helps to set black. A tablespoonful of spirits of turpentine to a gallon of water sets most blues, and alum is very efficacious in setting green. Black or very dark calicoes should be stiffened with gum arabic—five cents' worth is enough for a dress. If, however, starch is used, the garment should be turned wrong side out.

A SIMPLE INSECTICIDE.—Hot alum water is the best insect destroyer known. Put the alum into hot water and let it boil till it is all dissolved; then apply the solution hot with a brush to all cracks, closets, bedsteads, and other places, where any insects are found. Ants, bedbugs, cockroaches and creeping things are killed by it; while it has no danger of poisoning the family or injuring the property.

Farm and Garden.

DRYING FRUITS.—Families of farmers engaged in drying fruits are reminded that the solar heat is not sufficiently intense to destroy insect eggs that may have been deposited in the fruit when green, or in the process of drying.

TO REVIVE WITHERED FLOWERS.—Plunge the stems into boiling water, and by the time the water is cold, the flowers will revive. The ends of the stalks should then be cut off, and the flowers should be put to stand in cold water, and they will keep fresh for several days.

THE BARN.—Is your barn paying a proper interest on the money that it cost, or have you never thought of it in this way? Well, it should do so, and will if you use it to protect all crops from the weather, to shelter the cattle from cold, and to keep the manure from wasting until it can be applied to the land.

TO TAKE THE WOODY TASTE OUT OF A WOODEN PAIL.—Fill the pail with boiling hot water; let it remain until cold, then empty it, and dissolve some soda in lukewarm water, adding a little lime to it, and wash the inside well with the solution; after that scald with hot water and rinse well.

TO PREVENT IRON FROM RUSTING.—Warm the iron until you cannot bear your hand on it without burning yourself. Then rub it with new and clean white wax. Put it again to the fire till it has soaked in the wax. When done rub it over with a piece of serge. This prevents iron from rusting afterwards.

WORMS IN CHILDREN make known their presence by various symptoms—the most common being an irritation of the stomach and bowels, a foetid breath. With a pale or leaden complexion, great thirst and a variable appetite, disturbed sleep, and grinding of the teeth. To get rid of these pests use Dr. Jayne's Tonic Vermifuge, which destroys the Worms and breaks up their nests in the intestines. Besides exterminating Worms, no better Tonic can be found for the General Debility of Children or Adults. It relieves Dyspepsia, counteracts Sour Stomach, and renews the appetite. It is a safe, pleasant and helpful Family Remedy, sure to be useful in every household. Sold by all Druggists.

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FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 24, 1893.

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Publication office, 726 Sansom St.

To Contributors and Correspondents.

Contributors must enclose stamps for return of MSS. in case of rejection. THE POST will not be responsible for them where this condition is not complied with. Always enclose postage for correspondence, or other business matter requiring separate reply, to insure response.

A WORD TO OUR READERS.

There is not a home in the country that would not be brightened and made more beautiful by the magnificent companion pictures offered as a premium by THE POST.

They represent, in the highest and most perfect style of pictorial art, "COLUMBUS AT THE COURT OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA," of which the original is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, N. Y., and "THE LANDING OF COLUMBUS," original in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington. These Pictures (size 21x28 inches each) are genuine oleographs in beautiful colors, printed on the thickest canvas paper and have the appearance of Oil Paintings, and certainly far surpass anything ever offered in this line. In all the history of art in this country there have never been offered to the public two such grand, artistic, and at the same time patriotic productions.

This latter mentioned picture is the reproduced model from which the new Columbian, United States 2-cent stamp was engraved. The stamp will give an idea of the figuring of the picture—although more than four hundred times smaller,—but nothing can convey an adequate notion of the beauty, variety and harmony of its magnificent coloring.

They are charming as works of art, educational, and, relating as they do to the discovery of our land, possess an all-round interest that makes them both desirable now and valuable as future mementoes and souvenirs. As a memorial of 1892—the year of the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus landing upon our shores—these pictures would not only be objects of beauty and admiration to the present generation, but also of regard and love in the eyes of those to come. No true Americans who love their country should be without these splendid art works in their homes.

Both pictures are sent to all who send $2.00 for a year's subscription in advance.

Feminine Fickleness.

In these advanced days, when the beliefs of the multitude stand a good chance of being changed into action, popular thoughts quickly becoming the nation's deeds, there is some fear that the thoughtless may imagine popularity is a test of truth. We govern by counting heads, and, as a rough-and-ready method, it serves very well—better, apparently, than any that has yet been devised—but it would be a fatal mistake to suppose that the truth can be arrived at by the same process.

No fact is more absolutely certain than that popular sayings, superstitions, and lore are, for the most part, based on ignorance, and are utterly untrustworthy. If a thing is commonly quoted as the accumulated wisdom of the ancients, the safest plan is to examine that bit of ostentatious wisdom narrowly, for it is pretty certain to have a flaw somewhere, and as likely as not it is a sorry survival of sententious falsehood. The belief that women are fickle is one of these popular heresies.

We are not prepared, of course, to defend women indiscriminately against the allegation of fickleness, or to charge her accusers in a general way with a wavering fancy; it is only when a comparison is instituted between the constancy of men and women that we give the preference to those who have been maligned as "the faithless fair."

We are well aware that instances may be accumulated to prove almost any theory, and that the whole species of flirts may be arrayed against us; but these are chiefly women who are preparing to settle down into a steady companionship. One can readily understand how the charge of variableness has originated and has implanted itself deep in the susceptible, jealous, watchful nature of mankind. Not a few women depend upon coquetry and a pretence at waywardness as an attraction. They know that an approved way of leading their admirers to try to catch them is to be elusive and teasing to create misgivings, to played off one tentative suitor against another to be full of harassing winsome uncertainties. All these are fair weapons from a woman's armory.

But it must be confessed that in many of the ordinary concerns of life she often lends a color to the accusations of her detractors by showing a good deal of changeability of purpose. She is moved by impulse rather than by reasoning, by likes and dislikes rather than a balancing of probabilities; and in many cases her intuitions go nearer the mark than all the careful calculations of laborious man.

Seeing her a creature of moods and impulses in the smaller concerns of life, it is not unnatural to allege that the same irresponsibility and want of deliberate aim may be carried into more important engagements. But observation shows that it is not the case. One can certainly point to women who have given up one suitor for a more eligible admirer; but instances of that kind do not raise the question of personal preference at all. They are illustrations of false education and warped ideals; the woman thinks of marriage as a mercenary arrangement, and changes a worse bargain for a better to suit her theory of a settlement in life.

The whole transaction is artificial; it does not afford a basis for argument respecting the natural proclivities of the sex, and so may be entirely ruled out of our consideration. But, on the other hand, what sight is there more touching than the unshaken fidelity with which women will cling to a faded love?

We are astonished at the constancy of Jacob when he served so long for Rachel—no doubt "a lass wi' a tocher," and Jacob was a canny man—but Jacob's fourteen years are at this moment being wearily lived through by thousands of women who are meekly and trustfully waiting till laggard lovers shall be better off and able to provide for them in the style which is their due.

It is the same with many women when the men whom they have married prove unworthy of the confident surrender which has been made to them. A woman finds that her husband is not what she thought he was—her idol has feet of very disagreeable clay—or he falls away from what he once was, and, through drink or other disintegrating influence, becomes only the phantom of his former self; yet the wife will remain faithful to him to the last sad extremity. It is not always so; but the instances of woman's devotion far exceed those in which a man's care and love are untiring under provocation. There may be surface appearances of variability in women when minor considerations are before her, but let her nature be deeply moved, and the tenacity of her devotion matches the noblest exhibitions of exalted self-sacrifice to which the spirit of man has ever risen. It has been so everywhere and in all times where woman has had any opportunity of self-assertion.

It was not however to draw comparisons between the faithfulness of the one sex as compared with the other that we started this subject, but only to defend woman from an aspersion cast on her by those who perhaps, if examined with the same rigid scrutiny as they would apply to others, could not bear the test without wincing.

It is better to look in either case on the abounding instances of steadfast devotion than to be drawn aside by the cynical fault-finding which sees fickleness and inconstancy rife in both men and women. The truth happily is found rather in the opposite direction, and the man and wife who are wisely mated grow, as the years go by, into a perfectly harmonized union, so that no snatch of thought ever suggests other preferences. The charge of fickleness against woman is a hasty libel.

THE men or women who exercise their energies as household dictators are altogether disagreeable specimens of humanity, but unhappily are not uncommon. The dictator is often the last person in the house who realizes the discomfort that his system of nagging produces, as such a person, in the necessities of the case, is a pre-eminently selfish individual, whose horizon is limited to himself, and who takes in the rest of the world only as they are his and form a part in that way of his selfish interests.

A CULTIVATED mind may be said to have infinite stores of innocent gratification. Everything may be made interesting to it by becoming a subject of thought or inquiry. Books, regarded merely as a gratification, are worth more than all the luxuries on earth. A taste for literature secures cheerful occupation for the unemployed and languid hours of life.

SOME look upon successes and failures as lucky accidents or calamitous mischances, and wonder what the next turn of fortune's wheel is to bring them. Others profit by both, and, by studying their causes and the laws which govern them, become wiser and more able to insure a permanent and steady success in the future.

WE always find a thousand excellent excuses for our gravest faults; but if anyone wrongs us in the least, the offence is unpardonable. We have a thousand reasons wherewith to condemn our neighbor, but not one wherewith to excuse him.

THERE are many simple and graceful ways in which we may show honor to a guest without overtaxing our means or strength, and these are always in place; but the strenuous effort to make a show is and must ever be a signal failure.

THE human mind is always inexorable in demanding a motive for all human actions. It is only himself that each man permits to act without one, and avails himself of the privilege with astonishing frequency.

HOWEVER many friends you have, do not neglect yourself; though you have a thousand, not one of them cares for you so much as you ought to care for yourself.

THERE are many hours in every man's life which are not spent in anything important; but it is necessary that they should not be passed idly.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

J. R.—There are said to be 13,000 different kinds of postage-stamps in the world.

T. R.—The word Jingo in such phrases as By Jingo, etc., is said to be a corruption of the Basque Jainko, the Supreme Being.

SAM.—We should think that in New York, more than in any other city, a greater variety of languages is in use. The number of languages and dialects spoken there exceeds 100.

E. B. W.—If there were a motion that could maintain itself, it might run for ever and would be entitled to be called perpetual motion. But there is no such motion, and in the nature of things there cannot be any.

ASTER.—The most powerful telescope hitherto made is erected on Mount Hamilton, San Francisco. It magnifies 3,000 times, and if applied to the moon, brings that body to within a distance of 80 miles from us. It is proposed to erect a telescope at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, with a magnifying power of 8,000.

FRANCIS.—The word bunkin or buncombe is a native of the United States, and originally meant talking for talk's sake. It is said to have first been used in this sense by a member of Congress from Buncombe County, North Carolina, who explained, when his fellow-members wondered why he would insist on making speeches, that he was merely talking for Buncombe.

STONE.—A man of average size and activity will, under ordinary conditions of moderate work, take in 24 hours from 1-25th to 1-20th of his own weight in solid and liquid food—the solid being to the liquid as 1 to 2. Sedentary work and little exercise will cause a loss of appetite. You will want little to eat, but it must be good. On the other hand, life in the open requires to be supported upon liberal allowances of animal food. You will eat more, and you need not be so particular.

A. N. H.—The dulcimer is a triangular chest or box, strung with wires, which are struck with little rods. This is the modern instrument. Of the ancient Hebrew dulcimer we have no knowledge or tradition either as to form, compass, or tone. The names of cittern, or gittern, and guitar, are considered to be derived from the same Greek word; the cither was very common in the sixteenth century. The cithara is another name in Latin and Spanish for the lute, which was an instrument of the guitar kind. The citole was an old instrument of the dulcimer kind, and is thought to be synonymous with it.

MARGUERITE.—St. John's Eve falls on June 24th, and is reputed to be the eve of the birthday of St. John the Baptist. The festival in commemoration of him has always been one of the most popular in most parts of Europe. The people used to gather branches of trees and set them up over their doors with demonstrations of joy, according to the prophecy that "many should rejoice at his birth;" and towards midnight bonfires were made, and people danced round and leaped through the flames. In many places watches were kept all midsummer night, and those who walked wore garlands of flowers.

JESSIE.—Yes; very many have written of Christ besides the inspired authors of the New Testament; and those were amongst the greatest philosophers and historians, and of the highest repute for rectitude as well as learning. Besides this, they deserved the more credit for all they wrote testifying to the existence and the transcendent holiness of our Divine Lord, inasmuch as they were opposed, very many of them, to Christianity. "Our enemies themselves bearing witness to the truth." Amongst them we may name the historian Josephus (the Jew), Celsus, Pliny, Tacitus, Justin-Martyr, Julian (the Apostate), Martial, Suetonius, and Juvenal. If you subscribe to any public library you may obtain translations of some of these.

F. R.—The following is said to be a very efficacious French remedy for the cure of pimples and red spots upon the face and forehead: Put into a bottle half a pint of rain water; add a bunch of parsley, and let it macerate over night. In the morning wash your face with water and pure Castile soap; do not rinse it; wipe dry with a soft towel. When your face is dry, take a sponge, saturate it with the parsley water, wash with it, giving time to dry. Renew the application three times, allowing time for the parsley water to dry on the skin. Continue the treatment for two weeks, and all traces of pimples will disappear, unless they are caused by an affection of the blood, which then would require the care of a physician. The above recipe is well known, and much used in France.

S. W.—The foundation of the military system of France is that every citizen is a soldier. According to the law of July 27th 1872, every young man of twenty, free from bodily defects, owes his country five years of active service, five years in the territorial army, and six years in the reserve. In 1875, however, about twenty-five per cent. of the young men were exempt for various reasons. The German law is equally severe. According to the constitution of April 16th 1871, every German capable of bearing arms must serve for seven years in the standing army; three years of which are passed in active service, and four in the reserve. After the expiration of the seven years, five more years must be passed in the landwehr, and all men liable to service and capable of bearing arms, between the ages of seventeen and forty-two, must belong to the landsturm or home-guard, unless in active service, the reserve, the landwehr, or the marine.

MY DREAM.

BY E. O. E.

I bore into the silent night
My trouble and my pain;
And what I felt in waking hours,
I felt in dreams again.

I dreamed that in your presence bright
All burdens rolled away;
And what seemed dark to me before,
You made as clear as day.

I dreamed you held me in your arms,
And, though no word you spoke,
You pressed your loving lips to mine—
A dreaming thus, I woke.

I woke to find that half my care
Had passed with night away,
Because the memory of my dream
Made brighter all the day.

Paul Lorraine.

BY S. V. W.

IT is Sunday evening, and all the devout villagers are at vespers. Such a tiny church! But in this it corresponds with the surrounding village, for Dignoles is only a small fishing village on the Breton coast.

The service over, the bronzed fishermen and their wives come out, blinking their eyes at the sudden transition from the gloom of the church to the bright sunlight that still lingers on the hill. Monsieur le Cure watches his flock disperse, and then turns to assist the acolyte.

He has never once noticed the distant figure that has been kneeling in the shadow; but now, a light touch on his arm causes him to turn, and to be aware of the fact that a stranger has been worshipping among his simple flock.

"Father, will you confess me?"

At the sound of her voice a strong shudder runs through the priest's frame. By what strange fatality does she come to him, to him, of all men, for absolution? Surely he has suffered enough in the past. Are there still a few more dregs of bitterness to be drained from his cup of misery? Not trusting himself to speak, he motions her towards the confessional.

Then he nerves himself to look at her, as with downcast eyes she kneels.

Yes! it is the face of the woman whom, ten years ago, he had been mad enough to think would be his wife. Wild dream! What had come of it? She had broken her plight, and her lover's heart. He left England abruptly and went to Paris. There, after a round of dissipation, he fell ill of brain fever, and would have died, had not a friend—an old college chum, and now a Catholic priest—chanced to come to the same hotel. This friend had him removed from the noise and rattle of the hotel to the convent of A——. Here, the brothers nursed him back to health and reason. Gradually recovering those among such gentle influences, what wonder that the poor broken spirit should find consolation in religion? and eventually Paul Lorraine took the solemn vows of priesthood. So, in time, he came to be Cure to the simple fisher-folk of Dignoles. Here, he had deemed himself safe from any reminders of the painful past. He was dead to his former world; of his own free will he had cut adrift the old associations.

Now, upon this peaceful existence has come the thunderbolt of her presence!

She has not recognized him as yet, and the growing darkness will soon render it impossible.

He must control the tones of his voice, regulate them to the priestly monotone, and she need not know that her father-confessor is her old lover. He nerves himself to the ordeal, and the penitent begins to record her sins.

After a little, she hesitates, and then, glancing up beseechingly, says:

"There is something further I would tell—I have never confessed it yet, it has lain on my conscience for many years and caused me bitter sorrow."

Her tears are falling now, and it is with great difficulty that the priest commands his voice to answer her.

Does he not remember her looking just as tearful when she came to say that last "Good-bye?" Does he not feel again the very pressure of her lips in that last, long kiss? What would he not give to take her in his arms now! She is so close to him, so close; and yet, alas! there is a barrier between them, a barrier broad and high. His priestly vows, her wifely obedience.

Yes, she is married. During that awful time in Paris, when his brain was racked with delirium, the bells were ringing out for his lost love's wedding.

But he turns to her, and in low tones answers her plea.

"Do not sorrow, daughter, the Church is ever ready to give consolation to true penitents."

Then, as if to wound anew his poor tortured heart, she goes back to that happy time when she and he loved. To those roseate-hued days when they believed that naught could break their plighted troth. Before her lady-mother interfered with her imperious—"It must not, shall not be!" and with her stronger will bent the weaker one of her daughter into a tearful obedience to the parental decree.

It is of this time that the penitent is speaking:

"I had plighted my love by all that was good and holy. My lover believed me staunch and true. Alas! I was neither. I was weak, and so pliable in my mother's hands, that one day, urged by her, and almost beside myself with grief, I met and told him that I had been mistaken, that I had been too young to know my mind, that I no longer loved him. Oh, the misery of that lie! And he, so well had I been taught my lesson, believed me. He said some bitter, cruel words and left me."

At this, she sobs aloud but recovering quickly, proceeds:

"Fast in the wake of this sin of deception followed that other sin—the sin of a loveless marriage. At the altar I swore to love and honor a man whom I knew it was impossible to love and honor; and my heart was still yearning for the lover who was henceforth to be as one dead to me. God knows that I have suffered much already; my burden has been very heavy—"

The priest rises and interrupts her quickly.

"Daughter, will you wait here a few minutes? I am ill—I will soon return—a little fresh air—"

The sentences are jerked out as he opens the door of the little sacristy, and stumbles out into the tiny God's Acre that surrounds the church.

No! he could not have borne another syllable from her lips; her recital has stirred all the manhood with him. It is no rigidly calm priest who is now pacing up and down the grassy path. It is a weak and wavering man battling with the memories of his past, wrestling with the fever of pain and longing that has surged up in his heart, and praying with all the intensity that is born of despair. The veins on his brow stand out in great knots, his hands are clenched as if in a vice, and he can hear the quick, loud throbs of his heart, as he leans against the gray stone wall. How does the struggle end? With a victory for the priest, but at a terrible cost. He feels that another such a victory would be worse than death.

Back he beats the impulses that have so wilfully risen to torment him; with iron will he stifles the voice of love; for, brings it a blessing, or brings it a curse, what has he, the priest, to do with woman's love?

Though his heart still beats fast and unevenly; it is with a set, stern face, showing no sign of emotion that he returns to his penitent.

She is gone.

Pierre, the acolyte, is still in the church, covering up the several shrines, but of the lady there is no sign.

Was it all a dream, he thinks. Has his imagination been making riot with his past?

No! Pierre comes forward.

"Madame was very sorry to leave so abruptly, but she had no choice. Monsieur, her husband, had come and would not let her stay. Madame had gone very reluctantly, indeed tearfully."

So! her husband is unkind to her and, worse, a scoffer at religion.

Monsieur le Cure goes slowly and thoughtfully home.

* * * * * *

Early next morning the Cure is on the beach. The good fisher-folk need Monsieur's blessing before setting out with their boats.

But no boats are going out this morning.

Jacques Lespard has said, "Wait a day." And who knows better than old Jacques what the weather will be?

What boat is that, though, already some distance out, and making brave way for La Pointe Pierreuse, a rocky promontory about three miles to the southward?

Ah! that is La Dame d'Amour. Benoit, her owner, would not miss a chance—not he! Monsieur l'Anglais, who was staying at the chateau, had hired the boat for a day's fishing, and though he had heard Jacques' opinion of the coming storm, and although Madame, who accompanied him, had made objection, Monsieur was obstinate, and so they had gone.

It needs but another question to ascertain that the sailing-boat, now some two miles away from Dignoles, has on board Sir Hugh Pennant and his wife, the priest's penitent of the evening before.

The morning wears into afternoon, and the Cure anxiously makes his way down to the beach again.

"Has La Dame d'Amour been sighted yet?" he asks.

"No," and old Jacques shakes his head. "It is impossible for her to get into Dignoles this night."

The storm that he has predicted is already lashing the waves into creamy foam, every second the waves get higher, and it seems well-nigh impossible for a boat to live in such a sea.

The priest is nearly beside himself with anxiety. Someone touches his shoulder. It is Monsieur Du Maurier, the owner of the neighboring chateau. He is in despair about his guests.

"What can be done?" he asks of the Cure.

Just then a cry breaks from the little group of fishermen.

"Bon Dieu! There is the boat trying to round the point."

One of the men brings a telescope to the Cure, who looks and notes how perilously near the frail craft is to the rocks that skirt the extreme end of the promontory. Only a miracle can save her from being dashed to pieces!

A few hurried words with old Jacques, and the priest soon decides what course to take.

"Monsieur," he says to Du Maurier, "there is every fear that the boat will go on to the rocks. Our only chance of saving them is to hurry to La Pointe, and by God's help get a line thrown to those on board."

The chateau carriage is still waiting at the top of the cliff, and Monsieur Du Maurier, the Cure, and a couple of fishermen are soon driving furiously towards La Pointe.

It is a long way round, but at last the carriage stops, and they get out to walk the remaining distance.

In a few minutes they are standing on the extreme edge of the cliff. They are not one minute too soon, for the boat is entirely at the mercy of the sea and the wind, and is fast hurrying to the doom that awaits her on those ominous-looking rocks.

The priest and his party clamber down to the bottom of the cliff, and venture as near as they dare to the boiling surf. The men quickly get a rocket fixed ready to a line, and unroll a large coil of rope.

There is a terrible fear gnawing at the Cure's heart. What if his love should perish now, before his eyes, with the pitiful sin for which she had sought absolution still unabsolved!

Ah! the fate that they have been fearing for the little vessel has fallen on her. She has struck a rock and heeled right over on her side.

Now is the time for the rescuing party to send their line, but the boatmen shake their heads—it is scarcely probable that it will carry so far with accuracy.

Du Maurier and the priest anxiously watch the course of the rocket as it flies out to sea. Alas! La Dame d'Amour is beyond its reach. The line is hauled in. The men offer to try again, but do not give any hope of success.

No! Monsieur le Cure will himself carry out the line.

Du Maurier opposes this, but the priest is determined.

The heavier line is fastened round him, and he is soon battling with the hungry waves.

He is a splendid swimmer, and strikes out vigorously in the direction of the distressed vessel, but it seems an interminable time, to those watching on shore, before he eventually struggles to her side. Benoit catches hold of him, and the rope he has brought them at the risk of his life is soon secured to the boat.

Thus communication is established between the wreck and those on shore. But how is that frail woman to venture across the dangerous space? If the journey to the shore is perilous to strong men, how much more so for her!

"Never mind me," she moans, "only save yourselves."

Sir Hugh seems disposed to take her at her word. Not so the Cure. He almost commands the others to start on their way; he will bring Madame.

Sir Hugh goes first, followed by the two boatmen. Benoit stays a moment to help the priest. A rope is fastened round the lady's slight form and secured to her rescuer. He entreats her to hold fast to him, for he knows how the rough waves will beat her against the jagged rocks. Then they, too, give themselves to the mercy of the sea.

The priest is already much exhausted by his previous struggles, and now, with this extra burden depending on his efforts, it seems as if he had undertaken an impossible task. With the tenacity of despair his old love clings to him, and it is only by superhuman efforts that he prevents them both being dashed against the rocks. Half-dead, with his strong heart almost bursting with the struggle for life, he has yet time to feel a sense of joy—joy to have her so near, and to think that if the waves overcome them they will be together in Death—her grave will be his. But it is not to be, and before he realises how near they are to the shore, strong hands are hauling them on to the rocks.

They are saved!

* * * * * *

The next day dawns brightly enough.

There is still an ominous-looking roll along the shore, and the white horses can be seen disporting themselves on the crests of the waves far out at sea. But the fury of the storm is spent, and as Monsieur le Cure walks up to the chateau he wonders if yesterday's awful experience was in truth a reality.

But the cuts and bruises, and the languor that comes of extreme exhaustion, refute the thought.

He is met at the entrance by Monsieur du Maurier and Sir Hugh.

The latter is profuse in his thanks to his brave rescuer of his evening before, but Monsieur du Maurier looks concerned.

"Come in here, Monsieur," he says, and opens the door of his study.

He soon makes known to the Cure that Lady Pennant is ill. The shock and exposure, acting on an already weakened heart, have served to place her life in extreme danger.

This is a terrible blow to the priest. It seems as if his efforts yesterday were all in vain, and that he has saved her life only to meet this fresh danger.

The doctor enters at this juncture. He looks grave.

"Monsieur," he tells the priest, "I am glad you are here. Lady Pennant is very ill; indeed, in great danger; she is, besides, in great distress of mind. Will you go to her at once? I will wait to hear the result of your ministrations."

With a sinking heart the Cure enters the sick room. The patient is dozing, but moans uneasily; and it is a shock to him to hear her pitiful repetition of his own name.

"Paul, Paul," she cries. "No! I only want Paul. Let me see him once, ask his forgiveness, and then I can die in peace."

The priest approaches the bed. She looks up suddenly, but only recognises him as her confessor of the previous Sunday.

"Ah, father. You can help me, you will help me," she says. "Tell him that I am dying, and that I must see him once more," and so on, until her listener's heart is pierced anew.

He is undecided what to do. He is afraid to reveal himself to her, for the shock may be too great for her. He will lay the case before the doctor, and abide his decision. He leaves the sick room to seek Monsieur Lange.

The doctor's surprise is great when he is enlightened as to the state of affairs, but he strongly advises the priest to make known his identity to the patient.

"Do it quietly," he says, "do not agitate her. She has not long to live, poor soul! Let the little time she has here be peaceful. But the husband, would he approve of this?"

Strange! Paul Lorraine has not once given him a thought.

The doctor looks at him keenly.

"You would prefer for me to make this request to Sir Hugh?" he asks.

"Undoubtedly," says the Cure; and Monsieur Lange accordingly goes in search of the husband.

It seems a long time before he returns, bringing Sir Hugh.

So they are face to face at last! The discarded lover and the unloved husband.

It is no time for explanation or recrimination.

"I have no objection," says Sir Hugh, awkwardly. "As Monsieur Lange thinks that my wife will soon be beyond all human skill, it is not for me to debar her from this consolation. Some husbands," he adds, grimly, "might refuse to sanction such an arrangement, but I can trust you and her too."

Paul Lorraine does not attempt to speak, but merely bows his head and returns to Lady Pennant. She is fully awake now, and seems anxious that he should be near her.

"Father," she says, "they tell me that it was you who saved my life." Then, with a sad little smile, "But it was scarcely worth the saving, was it? Nevertheless, it was a noble deed. God bless you for it!"

He comes a little nearer.

"You asked me just now," he says slowly, "to find someone whose forgiveness you wished to ask. Tell me, do you still wish it?"

"God knows how I wish it, but I am more collected now, and know that it is impossible."

"All things are possible with God," he tells her gently.

"Father," and she half rises herself, inquiring.

"Yes," he answers, "promise me that you will not excite yourself."

She gives the promise.

Then Paul Lorraine discards the dull, monotonous voice of the priest, and speaks to her in the living, emotional tones that she remembers so well.

"Do you not know me, Aimee?" he asks, tenderly, and bends forward, so that the light may fall full on his face.

"Paul," she sobs, "Paul! no, it cannot be Paul."

He draws a little nearer; she takes his hand and turns back the sleeve of his coat.

He knows well what she is seeking—a little mark above the wrist, a scar, shaped like a horse-shoe. Yes, it is there, she gives a little cry as she sees it.

"It is all so strange, so unreal," she murmurs. "You the priest, and I the penitent. But, oh! can you forgive me?"

"Truly, and freely," he answers passionately. "Fate treated us unkindly, but it was not fate that sent you so unwillingly to me; no! it was the hand of God."

Then, holding her dear hand in his, he begins to talk to her of the Divine blessing.

It is an hour of sweet communion for both. She is perfectly content now, and will be ready to welcome death hopefully and happily, now that her great desire has come to pass.

Presently, Monsieur Lange comes in. He is anxious to know if the interview has proved too agitating for his patient, but a glance at the sweet pale face reassures him.

It is time for the Cure to go. He leaves very reluctantly, but with a promise that they will send for him if there is any change in Lady Pennant's condition.

A summons comes for him early next morning, and he hurries to the chateau.

"Lady Pennant is sinking fast," they tell him. She is still conscious, though, and her face lights up faintly at his approach. There is just time to administer the last sacraments of holy Church, and then the Cure sits down by her side to await the end.

It is not long in coming. With the lover of her youth holding her hand tenderly in his, and his name on her lips, she dies.

"It is well." Better to have her thus, than to have her living unhappy, and unloved.

Before he leaves the chateau, he asks for Sir Hugh, and then he makes his one request.

"Will Sir Hugh permit his wife to be buried in the little churchyard of Dignolet?"

The widower looks a little surprised, but consents. It matters little to him where his dead wife lies, and he has no intention of taking her home to the family vault.

So it comes to pass that the priest's dead love is buried within the shadow of the little church, where she found him that memorable Sunday evening.

A poor consolation, doubtless, but the Cure prizes it beyond measure. His the care, that all the year provides her grave with the sweetest of flowers; and he loves to linger near the hallowed spot that recalls sweet memories of his lost love.

Maese Perez.

BY GUSTAVO BECQUER.

MAESTRO PEREZ is a poor, blind organist, whose entire life is dedicated to music, in whose soul burns the veritable sacred fire of musical inspiration. From an old organ, in one of the most insignificant churches of Seville, he would elicit such strains as mortal ears had never before heard; the time-worn, battered instrument, under his fingers, became a magic thing.

It is especially at midnight mass on Christmas Eve that Maese Perez put out all his powers. The narrative opens with as intensely-vivid, richly-colored description of the crowds that flock to hear him. We seem to hear improvisations of an obscure, blind musician, on a poor, worn-out instrument.

On one especial Christmas Eve, however, the vast congregation seemed to have come for nothing, to be doomed to a cruel disappointment. The service began, but the familiar figure of the old musician failed to appear. Like wild-fire, the rumor now spread throughout the church: Maese Perez was ill; Maese Perez was mortally stricken, and would never touch his beloved organ again!

When consternation had somewhat subsided, and another musician was about to ascend to the organ-loft, a second murmur—this time of joy and relief—ran through the building. The frail form of Maese Perez was seen being borne to his place in a chair. Pale, feeble, evidently in the last stage of bodily weakness, he had insisted on fulfilling his best-beloved task of the year; not the commands of the physician, not the tears of his daughter could stop him.

The celebration of High Mass recommenced, and soon came that solemn moment when the priest gently raised the Host; a cloud of incense floated about the altar, the bell signalled the elevation, and Maese Perez, with trembling fingers, touched the keys.

First was heard a low, prolonged, and majestic harmony—a vast volume of sound, as if the combined prayers of universal humanity were made here vocal. Like the lulling of a mighty storm it died away, soon to be followed by a soft and gentle murmur, the caressing voices of angels wending their way earthward.

Next was heard the sound of hymns chanted from afar, a thousand in one. At first, seeming but one, by degrees the ear could distinguish air and accompaniments: both the most marvellously beautiful, thrilling each hearer to the very soul. And gradually, the elaborate combination of harmonies grew simpler, easier to comprehend, till only two voices were heard. Finally, one; that one, clear, piercing, metallic. The priest bent down, the sacred emblem showed faintly through a cloud of incense, and still the sustained note of the maestro expanded into a more and yet more magnificent burst of harmony. Each separate note seemed in itself a complete theme, a superb melody: this near, that remote; one, low-voiced and tender, the other fiery and passionate. The waves of ocean, the murmur of forest leaves, the notes of woodland birds, the summer breeze—all earthly and heavenly voices of men, angels, and God's manifold creations—were now made one by music, their voices pouring forth a glorious hymn in honor of the Nativity.

The crowd listened with bated breath, every eye moistened, every bosom heaved with pious emotion. The priest's hands trembled in that supreme, unutterable moment. The symbol he touched, the emblem angelic as well as human voices seemed to salute, became much more. It was as if the Heavenly Presence made itself visible to mortal eyes.

The organ was still heard; but its many-toned voices now died away one by one. Soon the deep hush pervading the church was only broken by a cry—the wail of a woman in despair. A last murmur, soft as a farewell sigh, and the instrument gave forth no more. The service was abruptly stopped. All was suspense and confusion till the report reached the crowd:

"Maese Perez is dead!"

True enough, the musician was found lifeless at his post. By his side was his daughter, calling vainly upon his name, pressing the once magically-endowed hands to her heart.

But, although the blind organist's earthly career was over, he continued in spirit to visit his beloved instrument. Christmas Eve came round again; a foolhardy musician of third-rate ability, who had envied Maese Perez his renown during the old man's lifetime, ventured to replace him now. What was the astonishment of the congregation to recognize the marvelous touch of Maese Perez himself. There was no mistaking the fact. No other fingers could have elicited such sounds. It was a veritable cascade of melody, celestial harmonies such as those are said to hear whose spirits are about to quit their mortal envelope; strains caught rather by the spirit than the senses; notes like the caressing murmur of summer winds, the kissing of forest leaves, the trills of the lark winging its arrowy flight towards the empyrean; seraphic choirs with cadence and rhythm unknown to the children of men, hymns that rise to the very throne of the Most High—all these were now given forth with the poetic mysteriousness, religious fervor, and inspiration of old. As to the unhappy man who had ventured to fill the place of Maese Perez, he descended the organ-loft, pale as death, stricken with terror. All know why. Other hands than his had touched the keys that night.

* * * * * *

Another year passed. Once more it was the eve of the Nativity. The Abbess of the Convent of Santa Ines and Maese Perez's daughter were talking in subdued undertones as they sat in the dimly-lighted choir of the old musician's church. The bell summoned the faithful to prayer; but only a few worshippers obeyed the summons. One at a time these stragglers entered, touched the holy water, and took their places.

"You see," whispered the Mother Superior to her young companion, "your timidity is groundless. Hardly a score of people have come; everybody is flocking to the cathedral. Do, then, play the organ. You are among friends only. What can make you hesitate?"

"I am afraid," replied the young girl, shrinking back.

"Afraid? Holy Virgin! Of what?"

"Mother, I know not. Of something supernatural. Last night I heard you say you wished me to play at Mass to-night: and, proud of the honor, I thought I would go into the church and practise a little, so as to get accustomed to the instrument. It was dusk when I came here, and not a soul was in the place. Far away, like a star shining on a dark night, burned the lights of the high altar. By those lights I saw—mother, I am speaking the truth, and nothing but the truth—I saw a figure seated before the organ. He sat with his back turned towards me, and began to play the most wondrous strains mortal ears ever listened to. Suddenly he moved. I was going to say that he looked at me. That he could not do, for he was blind. It was—it was my father!"

"Bah, Sister! away with such fancies—mere temptings of the Evil One! Say a Paternoster, an Ave or two to St. Michael, leader of the angelic hosts, and he will drive away the bad spirits. Here, put my own rosary round your neck—it has just this moment touched the reliquary of St. Pacomo—and go to your place, fearing nothing. See, the hour has struck; the faithful await the elevation. Be sure your sainted father will look down and bless his child upon this solemn anniversary."

The Mother Superior now took her seat among the nuns. The trembling girl, daring no longer to disobey, rose, slowly opened the door of the little staircase, and climbed to the organ-loft.

The service began, and nothing unusual occurred till the consecration of the Host. Then the organ pealed forth a glorious strain, above which rose a piercing cry. The Mother Superior, followed by the nuns and some of the congregation, hastened up the staircase.

"Look at him—my father!" cried the girl, pointing with trembling fingers to the seat she had just quitted.

Nothing was seen; but still the organ continued to give out the same wonderful melodies of former Christmas Eves. No visible fingers touched the keys. The musician's stool was empty.

A Terrible Plot.

BY T. M.

YES, I tell you, Helen, it must be done, somehow, between us—the man must be murdered!"

If that wasn't a horribly cool declaration to hear, waking up with a start from a doze in the night mail, I don't know what was.

The old gentleman, thus startled from peaceful slumber, felt his blood curdle and his very powers of movement paralyzed.

Good Heaven! What fearful sort of fellow-travelers had he now got in that next compartment, with the half-partition between—that, as well as his own, had been empty when the train started? Speaker and listener both women, too—Helen, and a deep, refined, feminine voice spoke.

Was he the man alluded to? He had money on him, a gold watch, a jeweled seal-ring.

The old squire simply could not, dared not, move from his corner, or give a sign of being awake, though the beads stood on his forehead and bald head, as he listened in dumb horror to the two fiends in the next compartment.

For "Helen" rejoined, with a laugh that was callousness itself:

"Yes, you're right enough, Margaret, but the bother is to arrange how, so that nobody will suspect the real criminals."

A light but awful pause ensued, broken by a whisper and a brutal chuckle—clearly the fiends were convulsed with hideous laughter over their intended crime.

Then Margaret said, slowly, as if meditating ways and means:

"That is certainly a difficulty; it always is in these murder questions—at least, that is my experience in arranging my crimes—a long experience, too, you must allow."

["Good Lord a' mercy!" muttered the listener, all hot and cold in a breath.]

"Yes; oh, certainly. Well, what do you suggest, then? an ounce of cold lead, in that lovely, lonely dell, near Cliveden—the Duke of Westminster's place? If ever there was a perfect spot for a murder," cried Helen, enthusiastically, "there it is."

"Isn't it?" rejoined Margaret. "I marked it at once. Shoot your victim, chuck the body into that dell—in winter—a heavy fall of snow—and there you are—it's buried safe till it's a skeleton."

Why, these women—nomen, save the mark!—were a pair of cold-blooded, slangy fiends! a sort of British Thug in petticoats.

Who was the victim to be? They laughed hugely over these remarks, as if these monsters in feminine from only went about with eyes for murderous nooks in every lovely spot of Nature.

The deeper tone that answered to the name of Margaret went on, after that outburst of merriment:

"Still, Neil, I don't take to the nook and revolver business, you know—make such a row, and might be overheard."

"Oh, bosh! my dear. We could arrange it so that nobody was near enough to hear the report; a little 'barker' doesn't bark loud."

"No; but still I incline to poison—its much better, and can look like a natural death if we select the right drug."

"Oh! could it though? Doctors are suspicious nowadays—and as to inquests, they ought to be abolished."

"De—cidedly, dear; but still ours won't be the first nor last undiscovered poisoning case, if we manage it well. Look, here is the letter of our invaluable accomplice, Dick, giving us full information as to the poison. Arsenic, he says, will do best for our purpose."

["Good heavens! I shall die of horror!" muttered the old gentleman, his thin hair almost on end. "I never heard the like of this before—never; but the young miscreants little dream there is a witness to their hideous plot for murder—at it again!"]

"But why must Jack Clifford be murdered outright, Margaret?"

"Firstly, if he is spared, how in the world is the man he has wronged to get the property and his sweetheart?" returned Margaret. "Secondly, Jack deserves his fate if ever man did—he has deserted his wife for the beguilements of an adventuress, who, after all, he has secretly stabbed, remember; and he has defrauded his cousin of his rights. My dear, he dies by arsenic poisoning—that's flat!"

["Oh, dear! oh, dear! this is awful! I'll stop the train—call the guard."]

"Of course Jack's courier shall be bribed. Ha! ha! capital idea, Neil! He trusts the fellow, but gold—the injured wife's gold—can do it apparently—see?—whilst the real criminals escape even suspicion. Oh, we're safe with that arrangement."

"H'm, yes; and we shall put up to-night at the very hotel—the Black Eagle—we settled to use for the murder, we can arrange the details when we see the actual room. Thank goodness! here we are at our destination, and—whew-w! what a——"

A distinct "whew-w!" it was of startled alarm, as both evidently suddenly perceived the old gentleman rousing up as the train stopped at Yarminster,, looking as scared and hurrying out as if the old gentleman par excellence was behind him.

He got into a cab, and, though it was one o'clock, ordered the driver to take him to the police-station.

"Yes, sir."

It was not far off either, being in the High Street—all provincial towns have a "High" Street—and the inspector looked up with almost as stolid a professional air and face as a London policeman.

"Well, sir, what is your business, please?"

"My business, inspector, is to lodge an information," returned the old gentleman. "I have just arrived from London by the train; I went to sleep in my corner——"

"Yes, sir; anyone else in the compartment?"

The inspector was at once taking notes—they are wound up to do that, you know, directly you open your lips.

"I was alone, but into the next one two ladies must get at L——. The voices woke me—at anyrate, I did wake th hear the most horrible crime planned—the murder of a man. Murder?" repeated the old gentleman excitedly.

But a policeman's equanimity is not easily disturbed. He merely asked, pen in hand:

"Yes, sir; and the names of the parties?"

"The man's name—the gentleman to be poisoned by those wretches—is Jack Clifford; the two women called each other Helen, and Margaret, and have gone to the Black Eagle Hotel, where they have arranged to poison their victim, by bribing his valet."

"H'm," said the inspector, looking sharply at the informant. "What particulars do you say you overheard, sir?"

At which the old gentleman, who gave his name as Dawson, detailed the plot he had overheard, with a minuteness which carried conviction that he certainly had heard what he stated, and the inspector began to look grave and a trifle puzzled.

Mr. Dawson, though terribly shocked and, naturally, somewhat excited, was plainly sober as a judge, and as sane as the official himself.

There might be something in all this, it looked suspicious; so he questioned the old gentleman, and finally told him he (the officer) would ascertain the ladies' names, and if, in the morning at ten, Mr. Dawson would attend again, and still wished to lodge a formal charge of conspiracy to murder Mr. Clifford, he would act upon it.

"I certainly shall attend and take the responsibility upon myself," replied the old gentleman with decision. "It is horrible. The coolness with which their crime was discussed, the manner in which the deed is to be cast on an innocent person, is simply fiendish, sir—fiendish."

And he departed; but sure enough, the next morning, at ten o'clock, in he walked.

"Good morning, sir!" said the inspector. "You still, I see——"

"Still to the charge—of course I do; certainly I do, Mr. —er—"

"My name is Rollit, sir. I have quietly ascertained that the ladies gave the name of Forbes this morning, and mentioned they believed a friend of theirs, named Clifford, would arrive to-day with a valet, and rooms were to be kept. That looks suspicious, sir, and tallies with your account; and if you choose to accompany me you can do so. I think it is my duty to now call on these two women and question them——"

"Arrest them on suspicion, Mr. Rollit; that is your duty. They are dangerous."

"Well, sir, of course, if they cannot entirely satisfy me, I must arrest them on the charge you make. Shall we go now to the hotel?"

"I am quite ready."

Perhaps Mr. Dawson had a sense of importance, as having detected, in time, to nip in the bud a monstrous crime.

Rollit was, of course, well known at the hotel; but he only sent a waiter up with a message, that Mr. Rollit and Mr. Dawson wished to see the ladies on business.

The answer brought was acquiescence; and the two were shown up to the private sitting-room, where sat last night's travelers.

Rollit saw a quick glance of alarm flash between the two women as he entered; and the elder—Margaret—said, with a visible tremor in her low-toned voice:

"What is your business, please, with us?" and then pressed her handkerchief over her lips, whilst her sister Helen fairly turned aside with a little choking sound in her throat.

"The miscreants are frightened, by Jove!" though the old scouser, in grim triumph.

But some people might have fancied that these hardened young women of thirty were trying not to—well, laugh over their proposed murder—the world is so wicked.

"Madam, I am very sorry," began the inspector, "but really I must——"

"Oh, yes; do your duty, Mr. Rollit. Sit down, my dear sirs—sit down, take things easy when we can," said Miss Margaret Forbes, jauntily.

The brazen wretch! Was that the game—audacity? Mr. Dawson felt his dander rising fast.

The inspector asked, abruptly:

"Do you ladies know a gentleman named Jack Clifford?"

Another look. Helen went "whew-w——" under breath. Margaret as plainly seemed taken aback.

"Ah—well, ye—s, we do; but only about a month. W—why do you ask?"

"Because, ladies, this gentleman charges you on oath with conspiring, last night, to murder a certain Jack Clifford by arsenic poisoning."

Margaret fell back a step, Helen sprang to her feet with a stifled cry, and both stared with wide, glittering eyes of alarm; or was it with suppressed, hideous laughter?

"You must state your full charge," Margaret got out, after that dread pause.

Both sat down again. Margaret set her lips defiantly.

Rollit read over the charge, and Mr. Dawson said, emphatically:

"Yes, I stand to it. I heard every word of this declaration of crime intended. You little thought I was in the carriage, young women."

"Didn't we, though, old boy?" muttered Margaret; but aloud:

"And suppose, inspector, that we decline to explain, or reply to questions; and neither admit nor deny this charge, what shall you do then?"

"My dear, ma'am, will be to arrest you both on suspicion, and take you before the magistrate, formally charging you with conspiracy to murder one Jack Clifford."

"O—h, yes, I see. Well, what say you, Nell?—Wouldn't be a bad ad. for us, eh?" said, jauntily; and positively, if she had not been a lady, Mr. Rollit could almost have sworn she "tipped a wink" as much as to say, "It's an awful lark, by Jove!"

Helen suddenly crushed her handkerchief over her mouth, and stuttered something about "going too far—confess."

Margaret faced round, and said, desperately:

"We—we did plot his murder—it's all true, and we mean to do it, too; no one can stop us."

"Good Heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Dawson. She rushed on:

"Yes, we confess the crime, and defy you and the law. We shall be aided, what is more, by a leading firm of publishers, Messrs. B—— and Co., and others they employ. We were fully aware, sir, of your presence; we saw you eye us when we alighted, we gave a false name here, a pretended order about a Mr. Clifford, and in spite of you all, we shall carry out our scheme in face of the world."

"You brazen-faced, wicked——"

"Hush, sir! Your names, ladies?" demanded the inspector, advancing. "I must arrest you, I'm afraid."

At which both the wretches burst into peals of laughter—they did, positively; they were so convulsed with hideous merriment, that it was minutes before Margaret could sputter out:

"We—oh, dear, I shall die!—we are Margaret and Helen Morton—the well-known novelists, and the 'crime intended' is the plot of our next collaborated novel!"

Tableaux!

THE HORSE.—In France when a horse reaches the age of twenty or thirty, it is destined for a chemical factory; it is first relieved of its hair, which is used to stuff cushions and saddles; then it is skinned; the hoofs serve to make combs.

Next the carcase is placed in a cylinder and cooked by steam at a pressure of three atmospheres; a cock is opened, which lets the steam run off; then the remains are cut up, the leg bones are sold to make knife handles, etc., and the coarser, the ribs, the head, etc., are made into animal black and glue.

The first are calcined in cylinders, and the vapors, when condensed, form the chief source of carbonate of ammonia, which constitutes the base of nearly all the ammoniacal salts.

There is an animal oil yielded which makes a capital insecticide and a vermifuge.

The bones, to make glue, are dissolved in muriatic acid, which takes the phosphates of lime away; the soft element, retaining the shape of the bone, is dissolved in boiling water, cast into squares and dried on nets.

The phosphate of lime, acted upon by sulphuric acid and calcined with carbon, produces phosphorus for our lucifer matches.

The remaining flesh is distilled to obtain the carbonate of ammonia; the resulting mass is pounded up with potash, then mixed with old nails and iron of every description; the whole is calcined and yields magnificent yellow crystals—prussiate of potash, with which tissues are dyed a Prussian blue and iron transferred into steel; it also forms the cyanide of potassium and prussic acid, the two most terrible poisons known in chemistry.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A peculiar suit was recently settled in the Courts, at Iron Mountain, Michigan. An Austrian resident of that place some time ago sent money and a ring to his fiancee, in Austria, telling her to come to America and get married. She came for that purpose, but met another man whom she fancied better than her old lover and married him. The disappointed lover sued the husband to recover $70 and the ring, and secured judgment for that amount.

A Cass county, Missouri, boy, who yearns for a life on the raging main, is said to have written the following letter to Rear Admiral Gherardi: "dear sur I am a yung man sixteen years old I want to get a place on a sailing ship and am obliged to you if you will tell me what to do and how much I can to begin and how long it will be before I am a captain thanking you for your kindness plese answer soon as possible as I am in a hurry and oblige."

Neander, professor of theology in Berlin, was one day overtaken by a thunderstorm. He jumped into a cab, but could not give either the number of his house or the name of the street. The driver thought the man was mad, and was about to tell him to get out, when the Professor, espying a student, called out to him and said: "Just tell the man where I live." Neander's sister, who kept house for him, took apartments for him near the university, as she thought the distance too great for her brother. A few days after their removal he complained of the long and tiring walk, and then it turned out that he had always gone to the old lodgings and so round to the university.

"Chicago," says a diamond expert, "is soon to be the greatest diamond market in the world, because Chicago is to-day the largest retail market and wholesale dealers must follow the set of the current. Nearly $2,000,000 worth of diamonds were sold in that city last year. It is a saying in Europe that a lady without a title does not wear them, but here everybody wears them. They do not indicate great wealth—merely taste for that kind of jewelry. Before the Prussian siege Paris was the centre of the trade. Just now London is. The best diamonds sold are from broken sets in Europe, from Brazil, and a few selected stones from Africa. Twenty-five million dollars' worth of rough diamonds were found in South Africa last year."

"Hallo" is almost a new word, as it differs in form, sound and use from the old "halloo." It is merely mentioned by Webster, and the searcher for information is referred to "halloo," which is defined as an interjection, a loud call or the noise of the hunt. The forms there given—"hallo" and "halloo"—are not well adapted to the American tongue, neither are they susceptible to the variety of expression that can be given to "hello." Probably the word halloo grew out of the call "hall, oh!" which was almost universally used by wayfarers in olden time when halting at a house along the way. "Hall, oh! the house," was another form quite common in this section in early times. This would quite naturally take the form of "hal-loo! the house." However, this derivation is not given by Webster, but merely suggests itself.

A POSITIVE HINT.—A man can be more politely insulted in Paris than in any city in the world. A gentleman who undertook to speak in public there expressed himself in such a low tone of voice that the audience were unable to hear him. He was lecturing upon a geographical subject, and copies of a map about three feet square had been generally distributed. Presently one of the audience rolled up his map in the form of a very long, attenuated funnel, inserted the small end in his ear, and turned the other end towards the speaker. It was a rather ludicrous performance, but not a laugh was heard among the polite assemblage. In two minutes, however, every map was turned into an ear trumpet, and the speaker saw himself confronted with a host of paper tubes none of which almost touched him. He at once spoke louder.

STATE OF OHIO, CITY OF TOLEDO, } ss.
LUCAS COUNTY }

FRANK J. CHENEY makes oath that he is the senior partner of the firm of F. J. CHENEY & Co., doing business in the City of Toledo, County and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for each and every case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by the use of HALL'S CATARRH CURE. FRANK J. CHENEY

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Our Young Folks.

JIM AND THE GEESE.

BY T. B. L.

ANYBODY can mind geese—geese are such stupid things. Even a girl can mind geese."

He was standing in the field, with the five geese around him, teasing, teasing, teasing his little sister, who was watching him from the window.

"Geese are as stupid as girls—girls are geese, you know, mostly. I know one girl who is a very big goose, her name is Gussie, though it ought to be 'Goosie,'" shouted the boy, waving his stick round and round.

The gander began to hiss, and the big grey goose to cackle.

"Jim," said the little girl at the window, "if you wave that stick, the big grey goose——"

"I know what you think about the big gray goose," interrupted the boy. "Didn't I hear you tell Bridget that you believed that it was a fairy goose and might some day lay a golden egg. Nonsense! girls are geese and Gussie——"

But the window was shut with a bang. Jim waited a minute to see if it would be opened again, and then drove the geese through the gate.

"Ah, Jim!" said a voice.

Jim looked up quickly, and touched his cap to an old lady. She was a queer-looking old lady; she wore a stiff white muslin cap on her head, and a bright colored handkerchief round her neck. She was known in the village as "Madame"; and all the children were rather afraid of her, though none of them knew why.

"Ah, Jim," said the old lady, "your grandmother does not find herself so well, so you drive the geese, and Gussie stays with her. Take care of geese; they are fine birds, though not so fine as mine. I have five."

Jim touched his cap again, and Madame went on down the road.

"As if I couldn't mind one, two, three, four"—Jim stopped and looked about him quickly, and then added, as he saw the big gray goose poking in the ditch—"five geese without everyone telling me to take care of them. Perhaps the gray goose is laying the golden egg in the ditch."

Then he began to laugh.

"I know, I'll find Miss Gussie a golden egg. A big yellow stone will do! I'll drive these stupid geese on to the common, and I'll get one of the boys to watch them whilst I have a good look for a big yellow stone. I'll put it into the nest."

A turn in the road brought him in sight of the common. Not a goose was to be seen on it, though usually there were three or four flocks, for nearly everyone in the village kept geese.

"Bother!" said Jim; "well, they can't wander far, and I'll find a stone in a few minutes."

He ran back down the road, and scrambled through the hedge into a field by the side of which were several piles of stones.

He found a yellow stone, but it wasn't big enough, then he found a bigger one, but it wasn't round enough. He picked up stone after stone, and examined every pile carefully.

The time passed quickly, but Jim was busy hunting for a stone. At last a satisfactory one was found: it was a very one, too, and Jim scrambled through the hedge once more.

On the road he met the postman carrying the letters, and then for the first time he realised how much time he wasted and how late it was.

As he ran across the common, he counted the geese. One, two, three, four, five—fortunately, none of them had strayed away.

"I'll soon get them home," he said.

But the geese were in no hurry to return. They seemed more stupid than ever. They examined every puddle, they tried to go the wrong way, they were as tiresome as ever they could be, and when at last the farm was reached Jim was tired out, for the yellow stone was very heavy.

"There," he said, opening the door leading into the paddock, and driving the geese through it, "you can stay there to-night. I'm not going to bother to put you into the yard. Shan't I get a scolding for being late?"

Everything was quiet indoors, and Jim crept into the kitchen and began to eat hungrily, listening all the time for the sound of footsteps.

At last Gussie appeared at the kitchen door.

"Oh, Jim!" she began, as soon as she caught sight of him, "where have you been? Grannie's been so ill, and I had to fetch the doctor; you are to go for the medicine before it gets dark. Why did you bring the geese home so early?"

"Now, Gussie, don't keep the boy talking. Let him be off for the medicine."

It was Bridget.

"Is grannie very bad?" asked Jim.

"She'll be better when——" began Bridget.

But Jim was out of the big kitchen before her sentence was finished.

He ran down the road and across the common, and though he passed "Madame" and she said something to him—something about geese—he never stopped to find out what it was, but ran on faster than ever, forgetting how tired he was and remembering only that grannie was ill.

"You have been quick," and Bridget, patting him on the back. "Now get your supper and go to bed, for we must keep the house quiet. Your grandmother is a bit better."

Jim wanted no supper, and he was so tired that he was glad to get to bed.

Five minutes after he was in bed he was fast asleep, dreaming the big gray goose was throwing yellow eggs at him, and that "Madame" was helping her.

In the morning grannie was better.

"Much better," Bridget said, as she gave the children their bread and milk and told them to take it out of doors.

"Jim," said Gussie, when both basins were empty, "what were you doing yesterday afternoon? You can't mind geese, though you do say it's girl's work. It's no use taking geese out if you bring them back——"

But the latch of the outer gate fell with a sharp click, and the gate itself was pushed open hastily by someone who was evidently in a great hurry.

It was Madame—Madame with her cap on one side, with her shawl crooked—Madame evidently very angry and very indignant.

She walked straight up to Jim, seized him by the collar, and began chattering away in French, shaking him vigorously.

Jim was too much astonished to utter a cry; but Gussie ran indoors to fetch Bridget. When she returned Jim had wriggled himself away from Madame, who was still chatting as she chased Jim round the field.

"What is the matter?" asked Bridget.

Jim promptly ran behind Bridget, and Madame began talking French to Bridget instead of Jim. Only when Bridget shook her head vigorously did Madame realize that she was speaking in her native tongue.

"The wicked boy steals geese," she said.

"Me!" said Jim, peeping out from his hiding-place.

"I can prove it," said Madame, shaking her first at him; "people see him with my geese."

"We have no geese of yours," said Bridget. "Children, drive out the geese."

Jim ran to the paddock, and Gussie threw the yard door open.

There was a cackle and a hiss as out of the yard waddled the big gray goose, followed by four other geese; and there was another cackle, as five more geese marched out of the paddock.

"Why! why! why!" said Gussie.

"My gracious!" said Bridget.

The only one who was not surprised was Madame.

"I told you," she said: "my geese——" Then she opened the outer gate, and drove the birds through it. "That boy stole them," she said.

Bridget, Gussie, and Jim did not say a word until the gate closed behind the angry old lady, and then they all said at the same moment—

"How did they get there?"

"I drove our geese home, and put them in the paddock," said Jim.

"And I found our geese on the road when I came back from the doctor's, and I put them in the yard," said Gussie.

"Jim, what did you do yesterday?" said Bridget. And Jim told the story of his search for the big yellow stone.

"Then whilst you were wandering in the fields our geese wandered home," said Bridget, "and you brought back Madame's geese from the common. Well, of all the big geese——"

But Bridget found it hard work not to laugh.

"We will go presently and try to explain that it was a mistake," she said.

And Bridget did her best; but Madame still firmly believes that Jim really tried to steal her geese.

THE health question—"How are you?"

AT A RUSSIAN WEDDING.—We were invited to a Russian wedding, which was to take place at 8 P. M. The ladies went without hats. The church was a carpeted room, and at one end was the Holy of Holies, where no woman is allowed to enter. In the centre was a reading-desk, and about ten yards from that there was a piece of silk. Here the two about to be married were to stand.

The bride, of course, was late. Instead of arriving at eight o'clock, it was nearly nine before she made her appearance. She was preceded by her nephew, a little boy five years old, holding an image of "Our Lord." The child gave this to the priest and then the service began.

Neither organ nor any musical instrument is allowed in the Russian Church, so the choir, consisting of five men, chanted. The priest alternately reading and the choir chanting went on for about half-an-hour.

The priest then addressed several words to the bride and bridegroom in Russian. Two gentlemen, groomsmen, stepped forward and were each given a crown, which they were to hold over the bride and bridegroom's heads until the end of the service.

The priest then puts a wedding ring on the third finger of the right hand of each, and the chanting goes on as before. Then, with the priest leading, they walk three times round the reading desk in the centre. Until this is done they are not married.

The now married couple are next led to kiss the steps leading to the Holy of Holies. Their friends crowd round to congratulate them.

Meanwhile the bride's sister and brother-in-law make their escape and go to await the bride and bridegroom at the house, and give them bread and salt as a symbol of hospitality. There is a reception after the wedding and the bride cuts up her veil and gives it, together with a piece of orange-blossom, to those of the guests who wish for a piece of it.

Two or three days after, all the guests, we among the number, received handsome satin bags of sweets tied up with orange-blossoms and richly embroidered in gold, and with the initials, in gold, of the bride on one side and those of the bridegroom on the other.

ON VANITY.—Pride and vanity, though differing in their first origin, often intermingle and become indistinguishable in their later stages. But pride much seldomer mingles with vanity than vanity rises up to pride. If we may put it so, pride is independent, self-supporting, stand-offish, and cold; whereas vanity is dependent on other's opinions, fickle, fussy, and apt to chatter of itself and its ways and claims. Pride will not listen to flattery, and in few cases will it condescend to bestow it. Vanity is constantly on the search for it, and adopts all devices to gratify itself in this direction, and is indeed apt at flattery with a hope of return in kind.

Mortified pride will sometimes give way to vanity, and vanity gratified will sometimes shake hands with pride. But the obtaining distinction between pride and vanity is that pride concentrates certain of the faculties which vanity dissipates—will and affection in particular. The proud man may be strong in will, and may love deeply, intensely. The vain man can scarcely do so; his absorption in himself in a small way is so complete; and both strong will and love imply a power of going out of self towards some other object. The proud man also may be capable of great self denials which the vain man never can.

On this last point it has been well said: "A vain man is so busy in bowing and wriggling to catch fair words from others that he can never lift up his head into true pride. Pride, in former ages, may have been led in too good repute—vanity is so now. Pride, which is the fault of greatness and strength, is sneered at and abhorred—to vanity, the froth and contamination of weakness, every indulgence is shown. . . . Vanity is unable to stand except by leaning on others, and is careful, therefore, of giving offence, nay, is ready to fawn on those by whom its hopes are fed." "Many men," says another, "spend their lives in gazing at their own shadows, and so dwindle away into shadows themselves!"

A YOUNG woman of Berwick, Penna., is a victim of the alleged announcement that by collecting a million stamps one can get rich. She gathered the required number in about three years' time, and, failing to secure a purchaser, she has grown melancholy, and it is feared that she will lose her mind.

CHAPPIE—"That was a narrow escape that Bappuma had." Samjones—"I had not heard it." Chappie—"Yes; another man of the same name was killed in a railway accident."

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

The shawl is returning to favor.

Toronto, Canada, prohibits peddling.

There are 50,000 Christian converts in China.

A piano contains about 62,000 single pieces.

Berlin has a 92-year-old physician who is still practicing.

A load of two tons can be readily carried by a full grown elephant.

A quarter of each generation is said to die before attaining the age of 17.

A 10-year-old Calloway county, Mo., boy stands 37 inches in height and weighs 87 pounds.

James Frost and Annie Winter were married in the springtime in North Missouri, recently.

There are 17,000 Italians in the chief cities of this country, 40,000 of whom are in New York.

A horse was sold recently at Danbury, North Carolina, for 25 cents, and afterwards traded off for a pocket-knife.

The hair on the head of Mrs. E. J. Whitton, of Topsham, Maine, is said to measure 8 feet 2½ inches in length.

A crow's nest containing a family of five birds, two of which, it is claimed, were white, was found the other day by a Newton county, Mo., boy.

A 9-year-old boy was arrested in the streets of Albany, one day lately, for drunkenness. It was the second time he had been arrested on the same charge.

A Chinese gentleman very seldom appears on the street with his wife; and under no circumstances could he be be induced to ride in the same carriage with her.

"Saturday to Monday" parties are the fad now among suburban residents. A party of city friends is invited out for those days by those owning large country houses.

Boston has a woman express messenger. She is Mrs. Alice M. Chenoy. She began four years ago, and now has three offices and five teams in daily use in her business.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sultner, who live near East Liverpool, Ohio, were married in 1830. Both are over 80 years of age, and are the parents of 11 children, all of whom are living.

The little son of Thomas Comber, of Hotchkissville, Conn., was attacked by a vicious game cock one day lately, and had not assistance arrived the child would have probably been killed.

Mrs. Hanna Stevenson, of Brookfield, Mass., who recently celebrated her 100th birthday, has been using tobacco to snuff and smoke since she was 16. She is one of the few surviving pensioners of the war of 1812.

Queen Victoria's first experience in an elevator was at the Imperial Institute, in London, a few weeks ago. There are no elevators in any of the royal palaces. The Queen is said to have been delighted with the lift.

Mme. Ida Lane Nay, of Vienna, has discovered a new use for cigar ribbons. She made a gown of 3000 narrow yellow ones, with stripe of plain black dress goods. This gorgeous robe was greatly admired at a soiree in Vienna.

Olive Schreiner thus describes a typical South African household: The father English, the mother half Dutch, with a French name; the governess a Scotchwoman, the cook a Zulu, the housemaid a Hottentot, the stable boy a Kafir, and the little girl who waits at table a Basuto.

Every time one of the big 13-inch rifles, built at the ordnance shops at Washington for the new battle-ships, is fired off with an armor-piercing projectile it costs the Government $600. The projectiles weigh 1100 pounds, and are driven by 500 pounds of powder for 15 miles.

High-art souvenir stockings will be on display at the World's Fair in all the glory and resplendence of the designer and the color caldron. For the Chicago girl there is a special pattern, with black foot, embroidered in violet with the appropriate motto "World's Fair of 1893" at the top of the instep. The upper part is in yellow, decorated with a bright red sun and "Hail Columbia" in violet letters.

There is great commotion at Hue, says the "Hong Kong Daily Press." The young King slipped out of the palace the other day, went for a rickshaw ride and indulged in some boyish pranks. The Court was scandalized, and the Council of Regency has, it is said, resigned. The king is a little over 15 years of age and has three wives. His marital responsibilities, however, do not seem to have subdued his boyish spirit.

The wardroom "boy" on board a man-of-war is often as old as many of those he serves, but the old fashioned title and form of address stick to him. Wardroom boys usually are colored men or foreigners. When a Haytian or Jamaican negro is obtainable he is regarded as a catch. This is truer still of the Jap. The latter seems to understand by instinct to remember a multitude of details without effort, and obeys promptly and without question.

LIFE'S RIVER.

Like as a plank of driftwood
Tossed on the watery main,
Another plank encounters,
Meets, touches, parts again.

So tossed and drifting ever
On life's unresting sea,
Men meet and greet and sever—
Parting eternally.

INSTANCES OF IGNORANCE.

A good deal of amusement is afforded sometimes by the answers of schoolboys to the questions set in their examination papers. Grown-up people occasionally exhibit ignorance just as refreshing. Here are a few instances:

In press-cutting agents' offices it is the custom when a paragraph in the newspapers refers to anyone, to cut the paragraph out and send it to the person referred to, with an intimation that he will be supplied with further cuttings on such and such terms. The principal of one such office was very much horrified to find that a clerk had addressed a few cuttings to Dr. Johnson, Bolt Court, Fleet street.

There has recently sprung up a prejudice against "tied" public-houses, many people thinking, rightly or wrongly, that the refreshment sold in them is of an inferior quality. In consequence of this, in some parts of the country one will occasionally see prominently written up over public-houses "Free House."

"Does that mean," the writer was asked not long ago by a verdant son of Adam, "that you can get drinks for nothing?"

This, of course, recalls the celebrated defence of the woman who was summoned for not sending her boy to school. It was shortly after the introduction of free education. Asked by the magistrate what she had to say for neglecting to obey the law, she replied that she was not aware that she had broken it. She thought education was free now, and that that meant that you were free to send your children to school or not just as it pleased you.

Another surprising piece of ignorance was recently exhibited in the police court. A woman complained to the magistrate that her husband had sold her for half-a-crown to another man, and asked the magistrate what she was to do. Unprepared to cope with ignorance like this, or, perhaps, thinking that the woman was indulging in a joke, the magistrate peremptorily ordered her to stand down.

For the benefit of magistrates who may in the future be asked questions of this nature, and to issue more considerate treatment for the poor applicants, we may say that there are hundreds of women in this country who honestly believe that their husbands have the power of selling them. We have heard a poor woman say in a country inn, with an earnest sigh—

"I'm sure I dunno what I should do if my husband were to sell me."

"Mistress Jones," said a lady, addressing a visitor the other evening.

"Oh, ma!" interrupted the eldest daughter, who was attending a very good school, "it's not mistress—it's miss;" and the child backed up her assertion by saying that her teacher had told her pupils so.

That teacher was as bad as the grammarian who was teaching some working-men to speak and write the English language correctly. He gave them some abbreviations to write out in full one evening, and among the abbreviations was "Mr." They wrote "Mister" and he corrected them, saying it was "Master;" it was only in common conversation that "Mister" was met with.

With teachers disseminating information of this kind, the blunders made by some envelope addressers the other day were not surprising. A tea company gave out a quarter of million of envelopes to a firm of envelope and wrapper addressers. The envelopes were to be addressed to the lady of the house in each case, and the addresses were to be taken from the county directories. Here is a sample of how the work was done: "Mrs. Major King," "Mrs. the Rev. J. W. Reed," "Mrs. Commander General Gray," "Mrs. Lord Justice Kay," etc. The tea company sued the wrapper addressers, and recovered $500 for breach of contract.

The eagerness with which children assail passengers alighting from tramcars and beseech them for their tickets had often perplexed us. An explanation came in due course. An inspector came along to examine the tickets. There was a bright-looking ten-year-old boy on the car who seemed to be giving the inspector a great deal of trouble. Everyone was beginning to look to see what the sensation was. It transpired that every crevice about this boy's clothing was crammed with tram tickets, and that he could not get the proper one to show the inspector. At last the inspector's patience was wearied out and he gave it up, especially as the conductor remembered giving the boy a ticket.

"How many tickets have you got in your pockets?" we asked the boy.

"Hundreds and hundreds," he said; "but I've got thousands more at home."

"What do you do with them?"

"Oh," he said, "when you've collected a million or some other great quantity and take them back to the tram company, you can put a blind person or a deformed person into a home where they're taken care of."

Perhaps as lamentable a case of ignorance as was ever presented in the civilized world came under observation of a man who lent a copy of Dickens' "Pickwick Papers" to a youth of about nineteen, whose father was a Scottish farmer. When the book was returned it was all frayed at the edges and badly damaged; the reason of this being that the youth had to keep it hidden in the stable, and to read it on the quiet, and the mice and rats had consequently been gnawing it. Had his parents caught him reading that book they would have driven him from the house, so fearful a sin was the reading of novels considered to be.

FORTUNE TELLER, to extravagantly-dressed girl: "Your husband will be a poor man—unless—" Maiden, eagerly: "Unless what?" Fortune teller: "You dress more economically after marriage than you do now."

Grains of Gold.

Consistency is the bugbear of little minds.

There is no virtue so great and god-like as justice.

If you want things to go right live that way yourself.

We cannot choose our duties, but we can perform them faithfully.

Before great victories can be enjoyed, great battles must be fought.

When ever you see a shadow it means that there is a light close by.

One of the first elements in every success, is to determine to succeed.

If some of our heads were not so big our hearts would hold more love.

The man who talks much about himself will always have a great audience.

He that calls a man ungrateful sums up all the evil that a man can be guilty of.

The world is full of people who want to do good but they are in no hurry to commence.

The heart is the largest thing in the world, because it takes more than the world to fill it.

In estimating a life or character, the question rarely turns on the correctness of this or that opinion held.

Every time a man sins he has one more reason for trying to prove that the church is full of hypocrites.

Unless thou thinkest that what has happened is an evil, thou art not injured; and it is in thy power not to think so.

Wisdom may be compared to water, as water leaves the heights and gathers in the depths; so is wisdom received from on high and preserved by a lowly soul.

Femininities.

That man has reached a high state of grace who never blames his wife for his own mistakes.

Nell: "I had a real good cry last night. I boo-hooed for an hour." Belle: "And did your papa get it for you?"

The alexandrite, a stone which is red by night and green by day, is one of fashion's favorite jewels at present.

Woman among savages is a beast of burden; in Asia she is a piece of furniture; in Europe she is a spoiled child.

Parents are not afraid of churches. They may not belong to them, but we never saw one who tried to keep his child away.

The researches of a Munich professor convince him that in ancient Egypt the belles used large quantities of face paints as complexion improvers.

The present Sultan of Morocco is descended from an Irish girl who became a member of the then royal harem more than a hundred years ago.

"Do you have much trouble getting servants in the country?" "No, indeed. We've had eight cooks, five waitresses and three laundresses in two months."

Mattie Todd, a niece of President Lincoln's wife, has been for years the postmaster at Cynthiana, Ky., having been first appointed to that position by President Hayes.

Ouida does not believe in women's clubs. She declares that if a woman wants such a thing it is an indication that her home does not provide her with all that she needs.

"You say she tried to stop a street car by whistling at it. Did she make a success of it?" "Yes, in a way. It wasn't her whistling that stopped the car, though; it was the face she made."

The daughters of officers, clergymen and professional men are seeking employment in the London shops, where hours are shorter and wages are better than in the occupations of governess and teacher.

Miss Fuzzie: "I want to break my engagement with Mr. Sappie, but I don't know how to do it without driving the poor fellow to suicide." Little brother: "Why don't you let him see you in curl papers just once."

"Miss Carson has a wonderful memory for faces, no matter how long since she has seen them!" "How do you know?" "I was with her yesterday shopping, and she recognized the cash boy when he brought her change back."

The five-pointed star on the national flag is a woman's idea. Washington wished to adopt the six-pointed or ecclesiastical star, but Mrs. Betsy Ross, who made the first American flag, showed him how a five-pointed star could be more conveniently cut.

American children are generally regarded as the greatest fruit eaters in the world. They are said to devour more fruit than children of the tropical countries where fruit grows wild. Fruit is very nutritious, and, consequently, very good for children.

Young women who are not too well endowed with this world's goods can now rent an evening dress for a small sum. If a girl is about to be married, and is unable to buy a suitable gown for the occasion, a bridal costume can be hired, with wreath, veil, shoes, etc. So says a London correspondent.

The Indiana girl who relinquished a bequest of $200,000 and declined a matrimonial alliance with a captain in the British army in order that she might be free to marry the man of her choice, deserves to be happy; yet she should be careful not to remind her intended husband too frequently of the sacrifices which she has made.

His eyes were heavy and had delicate pink borders around them. "What's the matter?" asked his friend. "I have run up against a mystery, and it bothers me." "Have you discovered a strange case of homicide?" "Not exactly. I've been trying to figure out how the man who plays the cornet avoids keeping himself awake all night."

A strange history might be written of the misfortunes which have befallen all the women who have been raised from the ranks of the people to seats on the thrones of Europe. Josephine de Beauharnais, her daughter, Queen Hortense, Eugenie de Montijo, and Nathalie de Ketchko, have each in turn contributed mournful chapters to the history of the heroines of royal romance, and have paid dearly for their greatness.

A fashionable New York lady recently appeared in a somewhat sensational costume—at any rate so far as the buttons go, for there were 1800 of them of varying shapes and sizes. Ten days were consumed in arranging and sewing on the buttons by a seamstress. On each sleeve there were 100 buttons; on the body and collar 330, and on the skirt 1250. These on the skirt were arranged in triangles, crosses, stars, and other curious shapes, on a foundation of black satin. The dress had a satiny appearance, and was very weighty—so much so that it would require a woman of considerable strength to wear it. The intention was to have 2000 buttons on it, but the entire surface of the dress would then have been covered. The buttons were all black, some round and others flat, and many of them were expensive.

Masculinities.

A nervous affection—A man's on the eve of proposal.

The easiest way for a man to pack a trunk is to get his wife to do it.

The devil has no fault to find with the man who is in love with himself.

The "bicycler's back" is an affliction resulting from excessive wheeling.

The man who falls in love with his head only, never gets a wife to suit him.

People are scarce who do not talk more than they should about themselves.

There are vastly more self-unmade men in the world than men who have made themselves.

Don't expose yourself to temptation simply to find out whether you are strong enough to resist it.

She: "Do you think there will be any men in heaven?" He: "No; they prefer to go where they can smoke."

One of the Duke of Edinburgh's hobbies is the collection of miniature silver ships, of which he has a collection of 50.

John H. Craig, of Danville, Indiana, who is reputed to be the biggest man on earth, is said to weigh 907 pounds, and stand 6 feet 5 inches in height.

The Court of Pope Leo XIII. comprises 1100 persons, nearly 300 of whom bear the title of Chamberlain. He has 20 private secretaries in his employ.

It is said of the late Charles M. Bell, the photographer, who recently died in Washington, that he "took" more notable people than any other artist in the world.

The Duke of Cambridge is the only member of the English royal family who does not pay letter postage, he being exempted on account of his military rank as Commander-in-Chief.

There is a man in Portland, Me., who makes a specialty of collecting steel pens, and whose ambition it is to own a series comprising every style and make manufactured in the world.

Like the Shah of Persia, the Prince of Wales can use his pencil very creditably. His drawing master was Mr. E. Corbould, and one of his boyish sketches represents a Jack Tar running from a bull.

A singular accident occurred to Cobb Harris, near Oneonta, Alabama, lately. He was riding a mule, when the animal suddenly threw his head up, striking Harris on the chin, breaking his jawbone.

There remains in the faces of women who are naturally serene and peaceful, and of those rendered so by religion, an after-spring, and later an after-summer, the reflex of their most beautiful bloom.

It's queer how the average man, who takes ever so long chances with the miscellaneous drinkables which the bar affords, worries dreadfully for fear the drinking water his town supplies him isn't absolutely pure.

"So," said Mr. Donegan, "they've been printing the funeral notice of a man that wasn't dead yit! It's a nice fix they'd be in if he had been one of those people that believe everything they see in the newspapers."

Mrs. Meadow, at city hotel: "Ooo! There's a fly in this soup!" Mr. Meadow, who has traveled some: "Hush, Miranda, don't speak so loud. No use exposing our ignorance. This bill of fare is in French, and mebby we ordered fly soup."

Wife: "Why, Charles, what do you mean by burning our old love letters?" Husband: "I have been reading them, my dear, and it occurred to me that after I die some one who wished to break my will might get hold of them and use them to prove I was insane."

Among the notable men who registered in New York lately was "Count de Loulopano, Chief of the Hoboken Police and President of the United States, Italy and Germany," but before he could present his credentials to Ward McAllister the police took charge of him.

Not far from Oak Bar, Oregon, a woman lately made a heroine of herself with her little gun in front of a child-seeking panther that her dog had treed. On hearing the growling and the row, she dropped her sewing, picked up a rifle, took a good aim, and as the first fire brought down the brute.

One of the most curious things imaginable is to see Emperor William dancing. He dances much in the same manner as he marches, stiff and unbending as a ramrod. In fact, his waltzing reminds one of a military manœuvre, while the vigorous exactitude and discipline which he displays during a square dance can only be compared to the movements of troops on parade.

President Cleveland has a peculiarity which so far has escaped comment by the press. He never wears gloves, either on occasion of public ceremonial or even when the thermometer reaches the zero mark. On the 4th of March, when people needed the protection of their warmest clothing, the President drove to and from the Capitol with bare hands, apparently without experiencing the slightest discomfort.

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

Children's dresses are the greatest comfort in these trying times that vex women's souls, for the styles so unbecoming to women take on quaint and attractive grace directly a little maiden realizes their picturesque possibilities. As for the little men, they never were so gay and dapper as they are this season. The cotton cheviots come in all the dainty shades of blue and pink, and the piques are brightly striped with scarlet or blue.

STRIPES AND POLKA DOTS.

The New York Sun says: One little fellow at the park the other day wore red cloth trousers, with a black ribbon tied in a jaunty little bow outside the knee. His coat was of brown, braided about with the same color, and outside it were the broad, fine collar and cuffs, edged with scarlet bordered frills. A three cornered hat of brown straw was set well back on his brown curls. All manner of little shirt waists are worn by the boys, with collars and cuffs of the bright French lawns, polka spotted with white. Reefers of scarlet or of soft old blue brighten up their more somber suits on cool days, and all the dainty shades of brown and gray in tiny checks and twills are used in their tiny trousers and jaunty coats. Little boys of 3 are got up like small monkeys in ridiculous little trousers and jackets, and even those who wear kilts wear the trousers underneath, with no petticoats.

A little girl's gown quite up to the latest mode has rows of satin ribbon in graduated widths covering the skirt and covering also that part of the waist which shows between in the shoulder ruffles. The sleeves are pure mutton leg, the whole gown a doll-like edition of one her mother might wear. A pretty foulard for a little girl of 8 or 9 has a yoke of embroidery, with a draping of brown corded silk as a finish. The waist is belted with the brown except for a little way in front where the material hangs out loosely. A row of quilled brown satin ribbon is inserted in the edge of the hem, which turns up on the right side.

A gown of gray blue wool with a plain skirt has a full surplice waist of changeable blue and changeable pink silk. The revers over the shoulder are of the cloth lined with silk and brier stitched three times on the edge. A quilling of ribbon or two or three rows of satin baby ribbon are also used on little girls' dresses. The guimpe is of sheer white lawn, made very full. Still younger little maids wear zephyr gowns made on the empire plan, with full epaulets of white embroidery and a guimpe of fine white lawn. All the old time dainty needlework, the shirring, tucking, brier work, hemstitching, tiny plaitings of satin ribbon, quillings of ribbon or lace and a profusion of embroidery enter into the construction of the little girl's summer wardrobe. The little skirts even of babies' dresses are beginning to be ruffled again, with frills of embroidery and hair tucks and insertions as well in the old fashioned way, but mothers of good taste still cling to the little plain skirts, hemstitched at the bottom or dainty with a little group of hand run tucks.

The gowns meant to arouse green eyed jealousy this summer were displayed last week. One was made of pale green and white wash silk and made in such a way that no laundress in her senses would ever undertake to wash it.

The skirt was gored, very narrow at the top and very wide at the bottom, where it was trimmed was five full, pinked ruffles, extending from the hem to the knee and surmounted by butterfly bows of green ribbon. The bodice was almost completely covered by a paterine of pinked ruffles. The sleeves were full to the elbow and ended in a deep cuff of pale green. A pale green belt was gathered at the waist.

The other was a confection of black china silk, lace and velvet. The full skirt was trimmed with bands of velvet. The bodice was composed entirely of lace over silks and had velvet bands at the waist and velvet straps extending suspender-wise from the girdle across the shoulders. The sleeves were puffs of silk ending in a cuff of lace. A big black lace hat half covered with pale pink roses and a black chiffon parasol with floating rose colored ribbons were the accompaniments of this gown.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Creamy Hair Wash.—1 oz oil of sweet almonds, 1 oz strong liquid ammonia, 2 oz rose water, 4 oz spirits of rosemary. Mix well. To be well rubbed in the hair.

Brilliantine Inseparable.—1 oz castor oil, 2 oz alcohol, 5 drops otto of rose, 4 drops oil of neroly. Mix well.

Summer Flowers Sachet.—3 oz powdered orris-root, 3 oz powdered starch, ½ oz ground musk seed, ½ oz essence of bergamotte, ½ oz essence of musk, 15 drops otto of rose.

Universal Sachet.—3 oz powdered orris-root, 1 oz ground sandal wood, ½ oz ground cedar wood, 1 oz ground rosin, 1 oz ground lavender flowers, 60 drops essence of lemon, 10 drops oil of cloves, 60 drops oil of French geranium.

To Clarify Soup.—For one quart take the white of an egg, beat it up with a cupful of soup (cold), then add the rest, and beat it on the fire with an egg whisk; when it boils, strain through a piece of tammy.

Horseradish Sauce.—One tablespoonful of made mustard, a very little brown sugar, two tablespoonfuls of vinegar and three of cream, and as much grated horseradish as will make it as thick as custard.

Tomato Sauce.—Melt a piece of butter the size of an egg, and mix it well with a dessertspoonful of flour, add the contents of a 6d. or 8d. bottle of pure tomato sauce; mix well, and then put in pepper and salt to taste, and a small bunch composed of a clove of garlic a bay-leaf, a sprig of thyme, another of marjoram, and some parsley. Keep the sauce hot until it is wanted, when the bunch should be removed.

Lobster Soup.—Pick out all the meat from a lobster, pound it in a mortar with an equal quantity of butter until a fine orange-colored pulp is obtained; to this add pepper, salt, and grated nutmeg to taste; take as much breadcrumbs as there is lobster-pulp, soak them in stock, then melt a piece of butter in a saucepan, amalgamate with it a heaped tablespoonful of flour, mix the lobster pulp with the breadcrumbs, and put both into the saucepan; stir well, and add more stock until a puree is obtained rather thinner in consistency than the soup should be; put the saucepan on the fire, stirring the contents until they thicken and boil, then draw it on one side, and carefully skim off superfluous fat; strain the soup through a hair sieve, make it boiling hot, and serve with small dice of bread fried in butter.

Haricot Beans—Italian Sauce.—Soak them in cold water for at least twelve hours, then put them into a saucepan with plenty of fresh cold water, an onion stuck with cloves, and a bundle of sweet herbs, and set them to boil; do not put in any salt until the beans are almost done, and during the process of cooking put in, at intervals, half a tumberful of cold water. Fry in butter some finely chopped onions till they become of a golden color, add a little ham and one or two mushrooms finely minced; moisten with some good stock; put in a clove of garlic, a few cloves, pepper and salt to taste, a bay-leaf, a sprig of thyme, and some parsley. When the sauce has simmered about an hour add one glass of white wine, a squeeze of lemon, and let it simmer five minutes more; then melt a piece of butter, add to it a very little flour, and then gradually the sauce, stir well on the fire, remove the garlic, thyme, parsley, and pour over the beans, which should be drained dry.

Onion Sauce.—Mince a good-sized onion, not too finely, put it into a saucepan with a piece of butter equal to it in bulk. Fry till the onion assumes a light brown color, add half a pint of common stock or water, and a small quantity of vinegar, pepper and salt to taste, and some minced parsley; then stir the sauce into another saucepan, in which a tablespoonful of flour and a small piece of butter have been mixed, over the fire. Let the sauce boil up, and it is ready.

THE nearest living relative of Shakespeare is probably Thomas Hart, now living in Australia, who is eighth in descent from Shakespeare's sister Joan.

HOW PERSIANS SMOKE TOBACCO.—In what is known as polite society in Persia, the most frequent form of hospitality offered to a male guest on his arrival at the house of a friend consists of three little cups of tea and a similar number of water pipes specially constructed for inhaling the "fragrant weed."

The form of these water pipes is very curious. The smoke is conducted to the bottom of a pint or more of water, and then sucked up in bubbles through it, a gurgling noise being produced. The portion between the pipe head and the water holder is, as a rule, always the same—a wooden tube, some fourteen inches long, with numerous indentations, and so pointed that any pipe head will fill it. The water holder is usually of glass, the shape of a wide-mouthed, long-necked decanter, the neck serving as the place by which the whole contrivance is held. In summer a porous clay bottle is generally used by all classes, from the richest to the poorest.

As in Europe the social status of a man may be guessed by his dress or his equipage; in Persia it is denoted by his pipe. A Persian shah or prince has his pipe covered with richly enamelled plates of gold and silver and incrusted with gems, such as rubies, pearls, and diamonds. The middle classes affect a pipe of wood having the end shod with silver, and from its under edge hang by way of ornament three or four small silver chains. The poorest of the people smoke a pipe of clay, with a long stem and a reservoir, the cost of which retail in the bazaars of Teheran does not exceed one farthing.

The tobacco smoked is usually Samsoon, a Turkish product, and the Koordi, nearly white in color, but with a pungent flavor. This latter is grown in Persia, and is much appreciated by many native smokers, who regard it as the "calumet of peace" par excellence.

EMPEROR AND ENGINEER.—During a recent railway journey of the German Kaiser, for some reason he wished to return to a station that he had passed, and gave orders that the train should go back. Several of the party represented to him the danger of such a proceeding, but he would not listen to them, and sending for the engineer commanded him to start the train back. He replied that it was impossible to obey his Majesty's commands. The young monarch stamped his foot, and with marked severity in his look and voice ordered instant obedience, saying he would be answerable for anything that might happen. The mechanic replied that his Majesty might dismiss him forthwith, but he declined to risk the lives of his Majesty and friends. The German Emperor, it is related, baffled by the sturdy common sense of the driver, turned on his heel and was irritable the remainder of the day. The next morning he summoned the man to his presence, commended him for his conduct, and gave him 100 marks.

PRIZES ON PATENTS.

HOW TO GET TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR NOTHING.

The Winner has a Clear Gift of a Small Fortune, and the Losers Have Patents that may Bring them in Still More.

Would you like to make twenty-five hundred dollars? If you would, read carefully what follows and you may see a way to do it.

The Press Claims Company devotes much attention to patents. It has handled thousands of applications for inventions, but it would like to handle thousands more. There is plenty of inventive talent at large in this country, needing nothing but encouragement to produce practical results. That encouragement the Press Claims Company proposes to give.

NOT SO HARD AS IT SEEMS.

A patent strikes most people as an appallingly formidable thing. The idea is that an inventor must be a natural genius, like Edison or Bell; that he must devote years to delving in complicated mechanical problems and that he must spend a fortune on delicate experiments before he can get a new device to a patentable degree of perfection. This delusion the company desires to dispel. It desires to get into the head of the public a clear comprehension of the fact that it is not the great, complex, and expensive inventions that bring the best returns to their authors, but the little, simple, and cheap ones—the things that seem so absurdly trivial that the average citizen would feel somewhat ashamed of bringing them to the attention of the Patent Office.

Edison says that the profits he has received from the patents on all his marvelous inventions have not been sufficient to pay the cost of his experiments. But the man who conceived the idea of fastening a bit of rubber cord to a child's ball, so that it would come back to the hand when thrown, made a fortune out of his scheme. The modern sewing-machine is a miracle of ingenuity—the product of the toil of hundreds of busy brains through a hundred and fifty years, but the whole brilliant result rests upon the simple device of putting the eye of the needle at the point instead of at the other end.

THE LITTLE THINGS THE MOST VALUABLE.

Comparatively few people regard themselves as inventors, but almost everybody has been struck, at one time or another, with ideas that seemed calculated to reduce some of the little frictions of life. Usually such ideas are dismissed without further thought.

"Why don't the railroad company make its car windows so that they can be slid up and down without breaking the passengers' backs?" exclaims the traveler. "If I were running the road I would make them in such a way."

"What was the man that made this saucepan thinking of?" grumbles the cook. "He never had to work over a stove, or he would have known how it ought to have been fixed."

"Hang such a collar button!" growls the man who is late for breakfast. "If I were in the business I'd make buttons that wouldn't slip out, or break off, or gouge out the back of my neck."

And then the various sufferers forget about their grievances and begin to think of something else. If they would sit down at the next convenient opportunity, put their ideas about car windows, saucepans, and collar buttons into practical shape, and then apply for patents, they might find themselves as independently wealthy as the man who invented the iron umbrella ring, or the one who patented the fifteen puzzle.

A TEMPTING OFFER.

To induce people to keep track of their bright ideas and see what there is in them, the Press Claims Company has resolved to offer a prize.

To the person who submits to it the simplest and most promising invention, from a commercial point of view, the company will give twenty-five hundred dollars in cash, in addition to refunding the fees for securing the patent.

It will also advertise the invention free of charge.

This offer is subject to the following conditions:

Every competitor must obtain a patent for his invention through the company. He must first apply for a preliminary search, the cost of which will be five dollars. Should this search show his invention to be unpatentable, he can withdraw without further expense. Otherwise he will be expected to complete his application and take out a patent in the regular way. The total expense, including Government and Bureau fees, will be seventy dollars. For this, whether he secures the prize or not, the inventor will have a patent that ought to be a valuable property to him. The prize will be awarded by a jury consisting of three reputable patent attorneys of Washington. Intending competitors should fill out the following blank, and forward it with their application:

"_____, _____, 1903.

"I submit the within described invention in competition for the Twenty-five hundred Dollar Prize offered by the Press Claims Company.

"_____."

NO BLANKS IN THIS COMPETITION.

This is a competition of rather an unusual nature. It is common to offer prizes for the best story, or picture, or architectural plan, all the competitors risking the loss of their labor and the successful one merely selling his for the amount of the prize. But the Press Claims Company's offer is something entirely different. Each person is asked merely to help himself, and the one who helps himself to the best advantage is to be rewarded for doing it. The prize is only a stimulus to do something that would be well worth doing without it. The architect whose competitive plan for a club house on a certain corner is not accepted has spent his labor on something of very little use to him. But the person who patents a simple and useful device in the Press Claims Company's competition, need not worry if he fail to secure the prize. He has a substantial result to show for his work—one that will command its value in the market at any time.

The plain man who uses any article in his daily work ought to know better how to improve it than the mechanical expert who studies it only from the theoretical point of view. Get rid of the idea that an improvement can be too simple to be worth patenting. The simpler the better. The person who best succeeds in combining simplicity and popularity, will get the Press Claims Company's twenty-five hundred dollars.

The responsibility of this company may be judged from the fact that its stock is held by about three hundred of the leading newspapers of the United States.

Address the Press Claims Company, John Wedderburn, managing attorney, 618 F street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Recent Book Issues.

"The Ironmaster," by Georges Ohnet, is a story of admirably sustained interest, skillfully told in graceful yet forcible language. The book, moreover, unlike the general run of French novels, conveys a sound moral. It shows anew how needful it is that husbands and wives alike should study each other's character before marriage, and it enforces in convincing language the oft-repeated lesson that a woman should never trifle with the affections of the man to whom she is mated for life. Published by Worthington Co., New York.

"A Southern Heritage," by Wm. Horace Brown, is a most attractive story of American Southern society life. The conversations are exceptionally vivacious, and the people represented are creatures of flesh and blood, even if some are fond of pleasure, high living, dancing, morphine, etc. Of course, there runs also in this bright novel an undercurrent of dark deeds, finally brought to a happy end by an ideal and appropriate marriage. Published by Worthington Co., New York.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

"The Century" for June contains some of the finest pictures and matter, stories, and miscellaneous that have yet appeared even in its interesting pages. Published by the Century Co., New York.

No better magazines for young readers than "Wide Awake" is published, and the June number is a convincing proof of it. Published at Boston, Mass.

"St. Nicholas" for June in point of illustrations and reading is a treasure for younger readers that grows in value from the first page to the last. Published at New York.

SPANISH VS ENGLISH.—Among many foreigners, especially those of the Latin races, the English language, because of its "harshness and roughness," is regarded as ill adapted to the soft and delicate shades of polite intercourse. A striking illustration of this theory was observed lately by a passenger on a steamer loading at New Orleans for Mexico.

Several Spaniards and a few Englishmen were among the bystanders watching the process of loading. As the porters crowded through the narrow gangway, laden with large bales of goods, their passage was occasionally obstructed by these lookers-on.

As often as this happened the porter would dart a swift glance at the face of the man against whom he jostled, and if it was one whose swarthy complexion indicated a Spanish origin, he would murmur softly and deferentially, "Con permiso, Senor"—By your leave, sir. If, however, the "obstructionist" bore the unmistakable features of an Anglo-Saxon, the porter merely growled in a guttural voice, "Out the way thar, boss."

He gained his object in either case, but the observant traveler was compelled to admit that the mellow, sibilant tones of the Spanish phrase jarred less unpleasantly upon his feelings, as well as upon his auditory nerve, than the harsher accent of his mother tongue.

It would not be impossible, however, to frame even the "uncouth English" into a similar phrase, which would be at once polished and forcible.

EDUCATING THE OYSTER.—Although it has been doubted that an oyster has been so far subjugated as to "follow its master up and down stairs," a consummation which might be accepted as a positive step in the rise toward ultimate civilization, at least, according to "Lawes's Seaside Studies," oysters are susceptible of being educated to a certain extent.

In the great establishment on the coast of Calvados the merchants teach oysters to keep their shells closed when out of the water, by which means the liquor retained keeps their gills moist, and they arrive in far distant Paris lively.

The process may be worthy of extensive publicity; it is this: No sooner is an oyster taken out of the sea than it closes its shells, and opens them after a certain time from fatigue, it is said, but more probably because the shock it received by removal into the air, causing its muscles to contract, has passed away.

The Calvados men take advantage of this to exercise the oysters, and make them accustomed to be out of the water by leaving them daily in the atmosphere for longer and longer periods. This has the desired effect; the well-educated mollusk keeps its doors closed many consecutive hours, and so long as the shell is closed its gills are kept moist.

THE DWARF.—Henry IV. of France kept four dwarfs, Pierre, Raphael, Denis, and Guillaume. One of the kings of Poland had one nicknamed Bebe, who was such a mite of a child that a wooden shoe, lined with hay, served him for a cradle, and he had to wear doll's clothes. Bebe's father was a poor peasant, and he was not sorry to part with the little creature for a good sum of money; so Bebe went to court, and the ladies made a fuss with him and sometimes tried to steal him.

Once he went out walking, and was chased by the crowd, who wanted very much to examine him closely. He ran down a side street and suddenly disappeared. Nowhere could they find him, though they went up and down hunting for him.

When they were tired of the search they went away, and Bebe came out of his hiding-place. Where do you think he had been? Why, he had crept into a big top-boot that was standing close to the door of a shoemaker's shop.

A TIPPLER'S STRATAGEM.—Sanerant relates the following anecdote of Schwartz, a famous German painter. Having been engaged to paint the ceiling of the Town Hall at Munich, by the day, his love of dissipation induced him to neglect his work, and the magistrates and overseers of the work were frequently obliged to hunt him out at the tavern. As he could no longer drink in quiet, he stuffed an imagine of himself, lef the legs hanging down between the staging where he was accustomed to work, and sent one of his boon companions to move the image a little two or three times a day, and to take it away at noon and night. By means of this deception, he drank, without the least disturbance, a whole fortnight together, the innkeeper being aware of the plot. The officers came round twice a day to look after him, and seeing the well-known stockings which he was accustomed to wear, suspected nothing wrong, and went their way, greatly extolling their new convert as the most industrious and conscientious painter in the world.

KILLED BY VANITY.—"People do not want portraits of themselves nowadays," said a photographer recently, "but artistic pictures, wherein their blemishes are so softened that they disappear altogether. You would be surprised if you could notice the difference between the real physical characteristics of the woman who goes in and the finished product as we place it on the counter for her in a few days, ready for some purpose of society. And men are even more fastidious. I prefer the woman customer, with all her vanities and foibles, for she is much easier to suit, provided always we flatter her a trifle. But the men are not satisfied with wholesale flattery. Vanity has thus killed our art.

TO PLAY MUSIC
WITHOUT STUDY
THIS CAN BE DONE BY MEANS OF THE
INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE PIANO OR ORGAN

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it **WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENT.** In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it **IMMEDIATELY** correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this **GUIDE.** **THE GUIDE** shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys.

It must be understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and **WITHOUT FAIL** is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book.

By giving the student the power to play **IMMEDIATELY** twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of **FIFTY CENTS.** Postage stamps, 5's, taken. For Ten Cents extra a music book containing the words and music for ten popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Address—

THE GUIDE MUSIC CO.,
726 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

IF YOU WANT INFORMATION ABOUT
PENSIONS

Address a letter or postal card to
THE PRESS CLAIMS COMPANY,
JOHN WEDDERBURN, Managing Attorney,
P. O. Box 483. WASHINGTON, D. C.

PENSIONS PROCURED FOR
SOLDIERS, WIDOWS, CHILDREN, PARENTS.

Also, for Soldiers and Sailors disabled in the line of duty in the regular Army or Navy since the war, for survivors of the Indian wars of 1832 to 1842, and their widows, now entitled. Old and rejected claims a specialty. Thousands entitled to higher rates. Send for new laws. No charge for advice. No fee until successful.

$25 to $50 per week, to Agents, Ladies or Gentlemen, using or selling "Old Reliable Plates." Only practical way to repair rusty and worn holes, forks, spoons, etc.; quickly done by anybody in their usual. No experience, polishing or machinery. Thick plate at one operation lasts 10 years; does finish when taken from the plater. Every family has plating to do. Plater sells readily. Profits large. W. P. Harrison & Co., Columbus, O.

PUGET SOUND
Is the Coming Great Country, and the Pacific Coast Terminus of the Great Northern Railway is inevitably its Great-est City. Finest location, best harbor, greatest resources and most substantial growth. Investments placed through us now are on a basis that insures a PROFIT OF FROM 100 TO 300 PER CENT in the next two years. Our Inside Water Front Property, close to the business center, at from $700 TO $2250 per lot on EASY TERMS. Cannot be equalled as a SAFE AND RAPID MONEY-MAKING proposition. We also negotiate choice Mortgage Loans and Municipal Securities. We are willing to guarantee any investment placed by us for a share of the profits. Highest Eastern and Western Bank References. For Maps, Pamphlets, etc., address the
FAIRHAVEN
WASHINGTON IMPROVEMENT COMPANY, Fairhaven, Washington.

PATENTS
FOR INVENTIONS.

Equal with the interest of those having claims against the government is that of INVENTORS, who often lose the benefit of valuable inventions because of the incompetency or inattention of the attorneys employed to obtain their patents. Too much care cannot be exercised in employing competent and reliable solicitors to procure patents, for the value of a patent depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the care and skill of the attorney.

With the view of protecting inventors from worthless or careless attorneys, and of seeing that inventions are well protected by valid patents, we have retained counsel expert in patent practice, and therefore are prepared to

Obtain Patents in the United States and all Foreign Countries, Conduct Interferences, Make Special Examinations, Prosecute Rejected Cases, Register Trade-Marks and Copyrights, Render Opinions as to Scope and Validity of Patents, Prosecute and Defend Infringement Suits, Etc., Etc.

If you have an invention on hand send a sketch or photograph thereof, together with a brief description of the important features, and you will be at once advised as to the best course to pursue. Models are seldom necessary. If others are infringing on your rights, or if you are charged with infringement by others, submit the matter to us for a reliable OPINION before acting on the matter.

THE PRESS CLAIMS COMPANY,
618 F STREET, NORTHWEST, WASHINGTON, D. C.
P. O. BOX 483. **JOHN WEDDERBURN, Managing Attorney.**
Cut this out and send it with your inquiry.

A RICH CUT!
CUT IT OUT, IT MAY SAVE YOU!

You have been suffering for years from some chronic disease or other; you have swallowed drugs enough to stock an apothecary shop; possibly also you have spent considerable sums with advertising specialists, and, having failed to notice the least change for the better in your condition, you now decide to give up all further struggle towards recovering your health, having come to the conclusion that there is no possible help for you this side the grave. Possibly you may be correct, but PROBABLY you are mistaken and on that probability I will take a sixty per cent. chance in order to cheer your now hopeless condition. Cut this ad. out and take it to your minister; possibly you may there meet some fellow sufferers on the same mission bent; let him invest ten or twenty dollars for you on the plan suggested in my open letter to the clergy; he will protect us mutually and you may be happily disappointed in recovering your health. My remedy is not a drug; it is known as

HELMER'S BI-OZONE CURE,

and among diseases cured have been cases of Epilepsy, Heart Disease, Obesity, Drunkenness, the Tobacco Habit, Consumption, Asthma, Catarrh, Pneumonia, Hay Fever, Whooping Cough, Nervous Dyspepsia, Liver and Kidney Trouble, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Headache, Skin Disease, Disorders of Microbic origin, etc., many of them relieved as if by magic.

TO THE CLERGY OF AMERICA:—

Gentlemen:—It has been my good fortune to discover a true remedy. This remedy I have found to be ozone and the multiplying results of the most gratifying character sustain my affirmation by facts. It has passed the experimental stage, having been successfully applied by prominent physicians in this city and elsewhere, as well as by some of the foremost families in the land, and, believing that your personal sympathy for your congregations extends to their physical as well as to their spiritual welfare I invite your kind arbitration on behalf of Truth and Justice and in the interest of a suffering humanity, that heretofore has been imposed upon by charlatans and unprincipled quacks time and again.

MY FIRST OFFER.

I will guarantee noticeable relief or cure to at least two out of every five patients who will faithfully use a monthly treatment of $10.00 each. To compensate you in part for your trouble I will accept a draft for $45.00 negotiable in New York City and dated one month ahead. Should the relief or cure in the above proportion be not obtained at the end of the month you may stop payment of draft.

MY SECOND OFFER.

I will send five ninety-day treatments of $10.00 each for a draft for $90.00, dated ninety days ahead, warranting noticeable relief or cure to three of the five or forfeit payment of the whole.

These offers must not lead to the supposition that I slam the gate of Hope in the faces of the rest, but some cases have taken four and six months and even a year before there was any well defined noticeable change for the better that were afterward cured. This is especially applicable to elderly people suffering from chronic cases of long standing.

This offer is made exclusively to clergymen and any other orders or offers, UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY REMITTANCE OF EITHER $10.00 OR $20.00, FOR A ONE OR THREE MONTH'S HOME TREATMENT RESPECTIVELY, will not be noticed.

Among the hundreds of testimonials received, the following from one of the responsible department chiefs in the New York Central R. R. System is to the point:

TREASURER'S OFFICE,
Union Stock Yard and Market Company,
Room 8, Grand Central Depot,
A. T. THOMAS, Treasurer.
New York, ——, 1892.

"DEAR SIR:—

"I have refrained from saying anything concerning your Bi-Ozone Cure until a thorough test of its effects had been made.

"Having used it daily for three months, I think I am now in a position to speak with some authority on the subject. A case of bronchitis and bronchial asthma is not to be cured in a day or a month, and I have not expected it, but I take great pleasure in assuring you that both have so much improved that I shall continue the use of Bi-Ozone, feeling satisfied that a permanent cure is only a question of a short time longer.

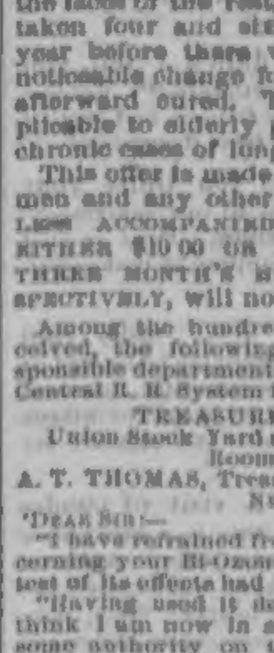
"A noticeable feature in the effect of the remedy is a greatly improved condition of general health and remarkable immunity from ordinary colds.

"Bronchial and asthmatic troubles usually have attendant catarrhal conditions. I am happy to say the latter is as much improved as the former, and with the gradual removal of bronchitis the catarrh is disappearing also.

"I sincerely hope your remedy may meet with patronage from the public; it richly deserves it.

"A. T. THOMAS, Grand Central Depot.
"Dec., 20, '92."

"To N. HELMER Esq., 12th St. and B'way."



N. HELMER, Chemist, 228 Broadway, Southeast Corner 12th Street, New York City.

BROOKLYN OFFICE: Dr. S. SILSBEE, N. W. cor 5th Avenue and 17th Street.

BRIDGEPORT OFFICE: Dr. H. M. DICKINSON, 139 Fairfield Avenue.

Dr. W. W. CLARK, Sole Agent for Ohio, 512 Franklin avenue, Columbus, Ohio.

Humorous.

MEDLEY FROM THE POETS.

The moon was shining silver bright;
  All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
When Freedom from her mountain height,
  Exclaimed, "Now don't be foolish, Joe!"

An hour pass'd on—the Turk awoke;
  A bumblebee went thundering by,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
  And spread the pall upon the sky.

His echoing axe the woodman swung;
  He was a lad of high renown;
And deep the pearly caves among,
  Giles Scroggins courted Molly Brown.

Loud roars the wind in constant blast,
  And cloudless sets the sun at even,
When twilight dews are falling fast,
  And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven.

Oh! ever thus from childhood's hour,
  By torch and trumpet fast array'd,
Beneath yon ivy-mantled tower,
  The old frog croaks his serenade.

My love is like the red, red rose;
  He bought a ring with posy true;
Sir Barney Bodkin broke his nose,
  And, Saxon, I am Rodertok Dhu!

Necessity and Invention.

"Well, hello, Claude! Where did yo' git dat chrysanthemum? It's de biggest I ever seen."

"Hush! hush! Dat's de bunch er cold-slaw, but don' tell de laidies, or I'll never forgive yo'."

When is a chimney like a chicken?—When it is a little foul.

"You are too pointed," as the muffin said to the toasting fork.

What is that which can be right but never wrong?—An angle.

Why is "E" the most unfortunate of letters?—Because it's never in cash, always in trouble and debt, and never out of danger.

"Did you ever get back the umbrella you lent Robinson?" "Yes." "How?" "I borrowed it again." "From Robinson?" "No; from the man he lent it to."

Mamma: "Robbie, didn't I tell you that you must not go swimming?" Robbie: "I didn't swim; the other fellows had just all they could do to keep me from drowning."

He, anxiously: "Do you think your father would ever consent to our marriage?" She, cagefully: "I don't know. Papa is just like all other men—so I suppose he makes mistakes sometimes."

He was no bully. "No," sadly said the stranger at the restaurant, as he looked at the cup of coffee handed out to him, "you can take it back. I haven't the heart to attack anything so weak as that. It's against my principles."

Friend, who pays a visit of condolence: "Ah, poor woman, this is a great blow to you—the death of your mother." Afflicted one: "Yes; who could have anticipated it? And she was so well and hearty. Why, only four days ago she kicked her son-in-law out of the house and fractured two of his ribs."

Servant, delivering message: "Mr. Crank sends his compliments to Mr. Blank, with the request that he shoot his dog, which is a nuisance in the neighborhood." Blank: "Give Mr. Blank's compliments to Mr. Crank, and ask him to kindly poison his daughter or burn up her piano."

"I now offer you a Rubens," said the auctioneer; "a perfect gem of genius—perhaps the finest painting that ever came from that master-hand." There was no bid. The auctioneer passed the Rubens and, taking up another picture, said: "Very well, gentlemen; I now offer you a Rembrandt by the same artist."

Some over-curious individual, having written to a San Francisco journal to inquire where Cain obtained his wife, is thus severely reproved: "Upon any subject of a public nature we never refuse to throw the desired light. But this is altogether a different thing. It is a family matter, with which we do not care to meddle. Cain died some time before many of us were born, and such idle curiosity regarding the family affairs of a deceased person we regard as reprehensible, and calculated to violate the sanctities of domestic life."

Extreme.—In the faint flicker of the library lamp sat two men—host and guest—looking fondly upon two glasses of wine.

Finally the host said—

"Why not help yourself?"

And the other replied, in a preoccupied way—

"Which shall I take?"

"Either," said the host.

Thereupon the guest, with a broad, somnolent smile, took both glasses from the table and emptied them. This took the host's breath away, and he said, with an injured air—

"I told you to take either; does either mean both?"

"Sometimes it does," replied the guest.

"I always supposed it to mean one or the other, and nothing else," said the host.

"Do you believe in Thackeray as a writer of English?" asked the guest.

"Most assuredly!"

"Well, then, you may remember that in one of his novels he speaks of a garden path which had a hedge of box upon either side?"

"Yes."

"Well, now, when he said there was a box hedge upon either side of the path, which side do you suppose it was on?"

"Why, on both sides, of course."

"Precisely," replied the guest; "and that is just why I thought I was entitled to both glasses of wine when you said I might have either. I only wanted to teach you a little lesson in English."

And then the host refilled the glasses, and drank them alone—to the fragrant memory of Thackeray, and the wonderful elasticity of the English language.

Statistics of Hospitality.—A lady was recently seen poring over rather a formidable-looking volume.

"These are statistics of hospitality," she said. When I began house-keeping, over twenty-five years ago, I began also a guest-book. Every visitor who broke bread in my house became a guest and inscribed his name in my book. I always insisted on date and place of residence at the time, and often the writer added an original line or quoted some apt sentence to commemorate his visit.

"I find that, in these twenty-five years, I have accumulated seventeen hundred and sixty-four names. This includes people who have taken a meal in my house and people who have spent six weeks with me; it makes an average of about seventy persons a year—not many for large entertainers, but the sum aggregates a good number.

"Of these seventeen hundred and upwards, I find that more than a third I have wholly forgotten—have not the faintest recollection of them or why they should have visited me.

"My daughter, who is soon to be married, you know, purposes starting a similar guest-book, and I have just been telling her to let its existence be a warning against indiscriminate hospitality.

"I think the keeping-open-house idea is often overdone, and my forgotten third shows that in my case it certainly was to just that extent."

An Odd Profession.—Perhaps the most remarkable trade in the world is that of Frau Geiby, a nurse in Dr. Schnitzler's Throat Hospital at Vienna, whose chief means of livelihood—and it is a handsome one—arises from the extreme insensitiveness of her throat. She lets herself out to budding medicos as a subject upon which they may practise manipulations of the throat and vocal organs.

She can open her throat in such a manner that the student can actually see the vocal cords, and can practise very delicate experiments thereupon, such as painting the sides of the air-passage with a camel hair brush, introducing different instruments, and so on.

After the embryo doctor has acquired a certain dexterity, this extraordinary woman half swallows a glass bead and the student practises removing it with forceps such as would be used in an accidental case. Her confidence in his skill is indicated by the fact that she keeps tight hold of a strong thread attached to the bead.

People go from all parts of Europe to study this lady's throat.

Dashaway (from the club window)—"There go Peeverly and his wife. They have been married only six months and I understand he has already borrowed eleven hundred dollars of her."

Cleverton—"And never means to pay it back, I suppose."

Dashaway—"Oh, yes. He says he will when her father dies."

DOLLARD & CO.,

1223 CHESTNUT ST., Philadelphia, Premier Artists IN HAIR.

Inventors of the CELEBRATED GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG and ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.	

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 30, '85. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA,

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, of Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

Prepared only and for sale, wholesale and retail, and applied professionally by

DOLLARD & CO.,
1223 CHESTNUT STREET.

GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING.
LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.

None but Practical Male and Female Artists Employed.

Any Time is the right time for everybody to drink Hires' Root Beer

A temperance drink.
A home-made drink.
A health-giving drink.
A thirst-quenching drink.
A drink that is popular everywhere.
Delicious, Sparkling, Effervescent.

A 25 cent package makes 5 gallons of this delicious beverage. Don't be deceived if a dealer, for the sake of larger profit, tells you some other kind is "just as good"—'tis false. No imitation is as good as the genuine Hires'.

Bright's Disease CURED

Send to the Bedford Mineral Springs Co., Bedford, Pa., for a handsome book, telling you how it has been cured and can be cured

WITH Bedford Water.

Trade supplied at 1004 Walnut St.

MOTHERS! MOTHERS!! MOTHERS!!!

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN while TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. It SOOTHES the CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN; CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," and take no other kind. Twenty-five cents a bottle.

25 CTS. PISO'S CURE FOR CURES WHERE ALL ELSE FAILS. Best Cough Syrup. Tastes Good. Use in time. Sold by druggists. CONSUMPTION 25 CTS.

Reading Railroad.

Anthracite Coal Used Exclusively, Insuring Cleanliness and Comfort.

In Effect May 14, 1893.

LEAVE MARKET STREET STATION.

Buffalo Day Express (Parlor Car)..... 9.00 a m
World's Fair Flyer, through Sleeper to Chicago..... 12.30 p m
Chicago and Buffalo Express, with through Sleeper..... 7.00 p m
Boston Express (through Sleeper)..... 7.00 p m
Western Night Express, through Sleeper to Buffalo and Chicago..... 9.00 p m
Rochester Express.....9.00 a m, 12.30, 7.00, 9.00 p m
Above trains run daily.

FOR NEW YORK.

4.15, 7.30 (two-hour trains), 8.30, 9.45, 11.31 a m, (12.57, p m from 24th and Chestnut streets—Dining car), 1.30, 3.50, 4.20, 5.15, 6.27, 8.35, (dining car), p m, 12.10 night. Sundays 4.15, 8.00, 9.45, 11.31 a m, (12.57 p m from 24th and Chestnut streets—Dining car), 3.50, 5.15, 6.27, 8.35 (dining car), p m 12.10 night.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.00, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.15, 3.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 8.45 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays, 8.30, 9.00, 10.30, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 3.30, 5.00, 6.00 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on night trains to and from New York.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 4.05, 7.55, 9.00 a m, 12.20, 2.00, 3.45, 4.20, 5.30, 6.25, 7.00, 9.00 p m, and Bethlehem only 10.30 p m, Sundays, 4.27, 9.00, 9.30 a m, 12.20, 2.30, 7.00, 9.00 p m, and Bethlehem only, 9.05 p m.

For Schuylkill Valley Points.

4.12 a m for Reading, Barto, Harrisburg, Pottsville, Allentown, Shamokin and Williamsport.

7.40 a m for Reading, Pottsville, Chester Valley, Pickering Valley and Perkiomen Roads.

8.35 a m Express for Reading, Pottsville, Allentown, Harrisburg, Carlisle, Gettysburg, Shippensburg and Williamsport.

9.47 a m for Reading and way points.

10 a m for Reading, Harrisburg, Gettysburg, Carlisle, Shippensburg, Lancaster, Pottsville, Shamokin, Bloomsburg, Danville and Williamsport.

11.05 a m for Pottstown and Barto.

12.45 p m for Pottstown, Barto and Reading.

1.40 p m for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg, Gettysburg, Chester Valley, Pickering Valley, Colebrookdale and Perkiomen Roads.

4 p m for Reading, Pottsville, Allentown, Harrisburg, Shamokin and Williamsport.

4.32 p m for Reading and Branch Roads.

5.30 p m for Reading and Pottsville.

6 p m for Harrisburg, Pottsville, Shamokin, Bloomsburg, Danville and Milton.

7.35 p m for Reading and Harrisburg.

11.30 p m daily, sleeping car line for Pottsville, Shamokin, Williamsport, Connects for Lock Haven and Clearfield, except train leaving Philadelphia Saturday night.

SUNDAYS—4 a m for Reading, Pottsville, Shamokin, Harrisburg, Shippensburg and Gettysburg.

8.30 a m for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg and Allentown.

9.15 a m for Reading and Downingtown.

9.35 a m, Express for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg, Shippensburg, Gettysburg, Shamokin and Williamsport.

11.45 a m for Pottstown and Barto.

3.40 p m for Pottsville, Harrisburg, Byers, Barto and Allentown.

5.30 p m for Reading, Pottsville and Chester Valley Railroad.

7.15 p m for Reading and Harrisburg.

11.30 p m. Sleeping Car Line for Pottsville, Shamokin, Williamsport and Beech Creek Railroad.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

Leave Chestnut Street and South Street Wharves, Week-days—Express 9.00 a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00 p m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 5.45 p m. Sunday—Express, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00 a m. Accommodation, 5.00 a m, 4.30 p m.

Returning, leave Atlantic City, week-days—Express, 7.00, 7.45, 9.00 a m, 3.30, 5.30 p m. Accommodation, 8.15 a m, 4.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 5.45 and 8.00 p m. Accommodation, 7.15 a m, 4.30 p m.

Parlor cars on all express trains.

Brigantine week days, 8.00 a m, 5.00 p m. Returning, 7.25 a m, 2.25 p m.

Williamstown, Glassboro and Mullica Hill, 8.30, 11.00 a m, 4.30, 5.45 p m. Sundays, 5.00 a m, 4.30 p m. Clementon, 8.00, 8.00 8.30, 11.00 a m, 3.00, 4.30, 5.45, 6.30, 7.30, 11.30 p m. Sundays, 8 a m, 2.00, 4.30 p m. Blackwood and Grenloch, 8.30, 9.15, 11.30 a m, 2.30, 4.45, 6.30 p m, and 11.30 p m on Thursdays and Saturdays only. Sundays, 8.30, 8.00 a m, 4.45, 6.30 p m.

For Vineland, Bridgeton, points on Maurice River Railroad, 8.00 a m and 4.00 p m.

Detailed time tables at ticket offices, northeast corner Broad and Chestnut, 833 Chestnut street, 601 South Third street, and 18 South Fortieth street, West Philadelphia, and at the depots.

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